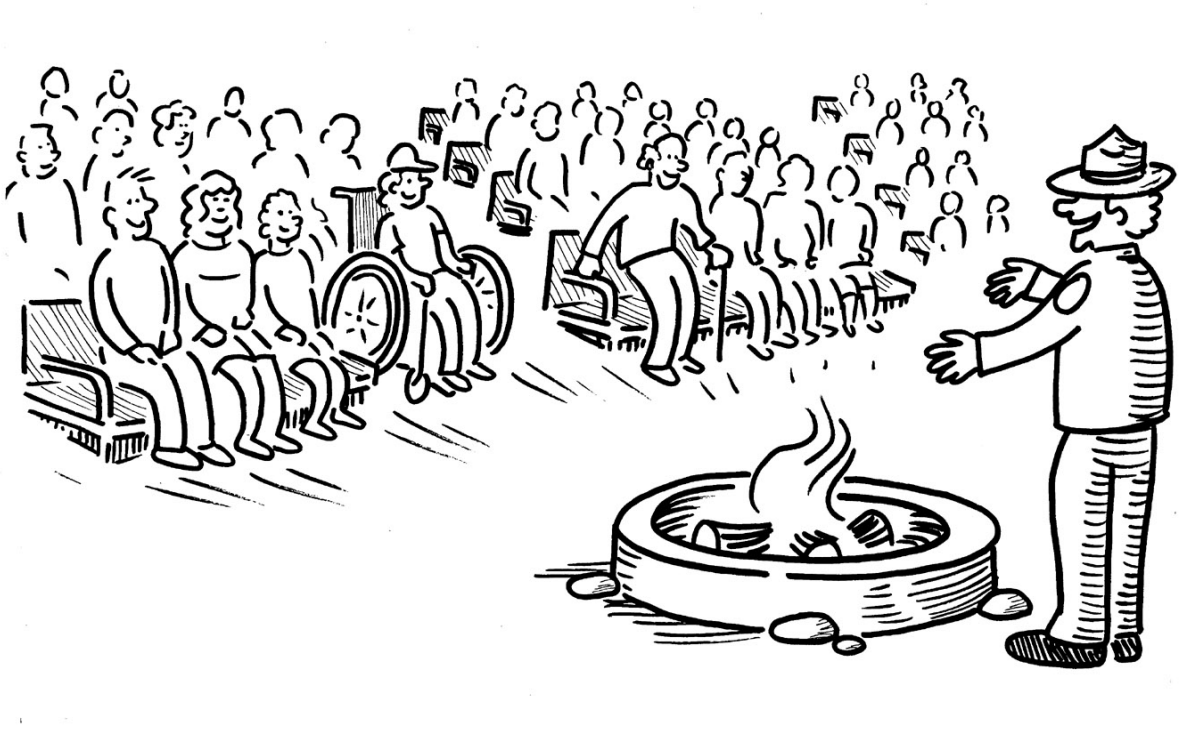
Interpretive Programs



Overview

Imagine being served a dish of your favorite ice cream, but you don't have spoon. What a frustration! This simple analogy explains the importance of why interpretive programs need to be accessible to all visitors. Even though the facilities may be completely physically accessible, some visitors may be unable to enjoy the audio-visual program or to participate in a guided tour of the area. If the programs offered are not easily accessible to them, or if they are unable to communicate with park staff, visitors with disabilities may prefer just to stay away from state parks.

The Americans with Disabilities Act not only addresses the issue of physical access to buildings, but also considers the need for equally effective communication with people with disabilities and program accessibility.

Equally Effective Communication (ADA 35.160 - 35.164)

State parks must ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. In order to provide equal access, state parks are required to make available appropriate auxiliary aids and services, where necessary, to ensure effective communication.

Examples of auxiliary aids and services for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing include qualified sign language or oral interpreters, note-takers, computer-aided transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed captioned decoders, open and closed captioning, TDDs and TTYs, videotext displays, and exchange of written notes. Factors to be considered in determining whether a sign language or oral interpreter is needed include the context in which the communication is taking place, the number of people involved, and the importance of the communication. However, **ADA does require that a sign language or oral interpreter be hired any time one is requested *in advance* by a visitor.**

Auxiliary aids and devices that assist individuals with visual impairments encompass qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, and assistance in locating items.

Examples of devices used by individuals with speech impairments include TDDs and TTYs, computer terminals, speech synthesizers, and communication boards.

Program Accessibility (ADA 35.149 - 35.150)

State parks may not deny the benefits of their programs, activities, and services to individuals with disabilities because facilities are inaccessible. State park services, programs, or activities, when viewed in their entirety, must be readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities. This standard, known as "program accessibility,"

applies to all existing facilities in state parks. State parks, however, are not necessarily required to make each of their existing facilities accessible. Although less desirable, providing services to individuals with disabilities in a different location is one method of achieving program accessibility.

Modifications to programs that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program or activity, or in undue financial and administrative burdens, are not necessary. Yet, steps should be taken to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity. Examples of alternatives include acquiring or redesigning equipment used in the program or moving the program to an accessible location.

Individuals have the right to participate in a standard program. Even if a separate or special program for individuals with disabilities is offered, state parks cannot deny an individual with a disability participation in the regular program. State parks may offer separate or special programs when necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from the programs. Such programs must be specifically designed to meet the needs of the individuals with disabilities for whom they are provided. For example, when offering a museum tour for people with visual impairments, allow individuals to touch and hold appropriate objects and provide detailed descriptions of the pieces included in the tour. Once again, a person with a visual impairment cannot be excluded from the standard museum tour.

Looking beyond mandated federal and state laws, it is the overall intent of the California Department of Parks and Recreation to make existing park interpretive programs accessible and all visitors welcome.

The following pages provide suggestions for improving existing programs to meet this goal. Interpreters may find most of these techniques familiar, because they are considered good methods for interpretation. Good interpretation always relates the message to the audience, communicating in a way that is both understandable and provocative to the individual listener. This requires the interpreter to be sensitive to the interests and special needs of the entire audience. The following pages are simply suggestions for different ways of communicating with a diverse audience. Many of the recommendations are repeated in different program sections, because they are useful in more than one situation. This book has been designed to be used as an easy reference. When planning one of the programs mentioned, read the section that applies, and any other sections that may relate.

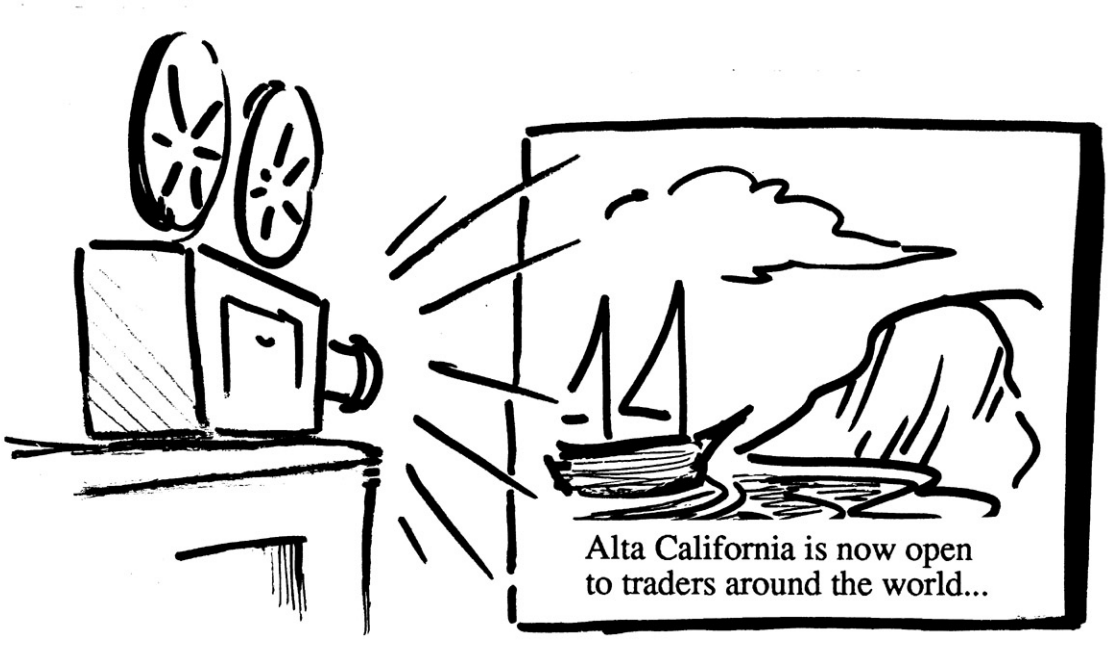
Audio-Visual Programs

Audio-visual programs include movies, slide programs, video programs (both interactive and passive), and audio messages. These programs are well-suited for telling sequential stories, as well as for providing overviews of park resources. Audio-visual (A/V) media can transport visitors through time and space to experience significant historic events or dramatic natural processes. Soundtracks, movement, color, and special effects make A/V programs effective at suggesting reality and evoking an audience's emotional response. These media are often portable, allowing information on inaccessible areas to be presented in accessible locations. Also, videos can be purchased by visitors and viewed later.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering audio-visual programs that will be universally satisfying and informative for a diverse audience.

Hearing Impairments

- Speak with visitors to determine how to meet their needs at your A/V program. Inform visitors of any assistive listening systems or devices available at the facility. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- If requested in advance by a visitor with a hearing impairment, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- If you know sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for presenting A/V programs.



- Allow visitors with hearing impairments to sit up front so they can hear better, watch the oral or sign language interpreter, or facilitate speech-reading.
- Present films that are captioned, or provide a transcript for those films that are not captioned. For example, Brannan Island State Recreation Area provides printed transcripts of the video Windows on the Delta for visitor use.
- Be sure to allow extra time between slides for visitors to see the images you have explained. Some visitors may be watching you and speech-reading, or they may be watching the sign language or oral interpreter. If the room is too dark, a spotlight on you and/or the sign language interpreter may be also necessary.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin to speak, and be sure your audience has understood what was just said before continuing.
- Repeat questions from the audience and allow sufficient time for them to respond. An individual with a hearing impairment may understand the question a few seconds later because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Speak clearly and in a normal tone of voice. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Speak louder only if it is requested, and then try not to shout.
- Try to use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure is best, because it is the same syntax of American Sign Language. For example, say, "The snake ate the mouse," not, "The mouse was eaten by the snake."
- Always face the audience while speaking. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it may be difficult for the oral or sign language interpreter to hear you.
- Avoid sweeping arm movements or moving around while speaking, as this may distract visitors who are speech-reading or watching the sign language interpreter.
- Have a supplementary reading list available to augment your A/V program. Individuals may wish to learn more about the subjects presented.

Learning Disabilities

- Beforehand, select objects that may be touched that relate to the theme of the A/V program. Incorporating them in your presentation will reinforce visual and audible information, as well as increasing interest in your program.
- Inform the audience of the length of the program and the location of the exits, and permit them to leave early. Some individuals with learning disabilities have shorter attention spans and may wish to leave before the program is over. For longer presentations, you may want to schedule a break. Notify the audience before the presentation begins that an intermission can be expected.
- Choose A/V programs appropriate for your audience's age. Program content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" visitors with learning disabilities. An overload of visual, auditory, or tactile stimulation can easily confuse some individuals.
- Information should be grouped together in an organized fashion, given step-by-step, and reinforced through repetition.

- Discuss ideas in basic terms. and avoid abstractions. Relating new information to something already familiar to your audience will assist learning.
- Make smooth transitions in presentations. Jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Encourage audience participation whenever possible. This will reinforce information and increase interest in your program. For example, pass around objects that pertain to the theme of the A/V program.
- Take the time to individualize colors, textures, sounds, or smells of objects portrayed in a slide presentation. Discuss important characteristics individually; otherwise, they may be overlooked.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with their ability to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause unnecessary embarrassment.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical and calendar time. If this information is included in your A/V program, use different ways of explaining or demonstrating it. For example, one way is to cut string or paper in different lengths relative to the periods of time you are discussing, and relative to the age of your audience. Place them next to each other to demonstrate the difference.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading. Visitors may wish to learn more about the subject presented.
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- If the entire audience consists of visitors with learning disabilities, you may consider limiting the program to no longer than 30 minutes, with only one or two primary ideas.

Mental Retardation

- Choose an area with minimal background noise and few distractions for your presentation.
- Inform the audience of the length of the program and the location of the exits. Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans, and may wish to leave before the program is over. For longer presentations, you may want to schedule a break. Notify the audience before the presentation begins that an intermission can be expected.
- Incorporate items that may be touched and that pertain to the theme of the program. Models, plant and animal specimens, and dioramas add another dimension to verbal explanation.
- In a presentation that involves discussion, repeat questions from the audience. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention. Once lost from the conversation, their interest in the presentation may be lost.

- Do not immediately dismiss a question as being irrelevant. Sometimes, poor language skills confuse what the individual may be trying to say. Try your best to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Encourage audience participation when possible. If individuals with mental retardation are left with “empty time,” they may lose interest and could become disruptive.
- Give information in small segments, reinforced through repetition. Discuss ideas in basic terms, and avoid abstractions. Relating new information to something already familiar to your audience will assist learning.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words in a handout, along with suggestions for further reading. Some visitors may wish to learn more about the subjects presented during the A/V program.
- If a special program has been requested for a group of individuals with mental retardation, find out what they are interested in and prepare your A/V program around those interests. Consider limiting the program to no longer than 30 minutes, and stay focused on your theme. An overload of information may cause confusion.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the facility or area where the A/V program will be presented. The area needs to be accessible to wheelchairs, and wheelchair seating requirements should be met. Stairs, curbs, and slippery surfaces may pose difficulty for visitors with mobility impairments. A route with ramps may be necessary. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section, beginning on page 125 for more information and the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*. Obtain a copy of the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and the *California State Accessibility Standards* for additional information and requirements.
- When publicizing the A/V program, be sure to indicate the level of accessibility of the program, as well as the facility where it will be presented.
- In areas where A/V programs are to be presented without seating, suggest to visitors using wheelchairs that they sit in front of the audience, so they can see and hear better. A few seats should be provided, if possible, for visitors who may be unable to stand for long periods of time.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of individuals in wheelchairs. The video screen should be placed at a height that does not require the audience to tilt their heads backward to see, as some visitors may have limited muscle movement in their necks and shoulders.
- Provide A/V programs for natural areas, historic sites and structures, or objects that are inaccessible to people using wheelchairs or other assistive devices (ADA, 35.150). Seacliff State Beach presents a video on local tide pools which can be viewed and enjoyed by visitors unable to access the tide pool areas.

Visual Impairments

- Try to meet with visitors who are visually impaired before the A/V program, to ask if there is anything they would like described. For example, if the program is about birds in the region, you may have a mounted bird that visitors can touch while you describe it.
- Choose an area with minimal background noise for presenting A/V programs. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Beforehand, evaluate the facility or area where the A/V program is to be presented. Plan a route to the room or area that is accessible for the entire audience. Remove any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered. Once visitors are inside the room or at their destination, provide a general orientation to the whole area, including ambiance and visual details.
- Suggest to visitors with visual impairments that they sit up close to the A/V screen.
- Wait for the group to settle before you begin the program.
- Handouts supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- While narrating the A/V presentation, use very descriptive words, and include as much detail as you can. For example, do not just say, “There is a mountain in the background behind the lake,” say instead, “There is an enormous, snow-capped, pine tree-covered mountain rising behind the shimmering lake.”
- Provide the narrative of A/V programs in an audiodescription format. Audiodescription describes what is seen on the video or film in detail, along with the standard narration. For more information, refer to the Audiodescription section on page 37.

Limited English Proficiency

- If visitation warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter present the program.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate for you. Or, if you think that will be too disruptive, arrange for a private tour.
- During a slide presentation, point to objects as you refer to them, so visitors can more easily follow along.
- Read aloud any written information displayed in the slides.
- Repeat information in different ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey interpretive information.
- Offer films, videos, or slides narrated in different languages.
- If visitation warrants it, provide A/V programs subtitled in different languages or provide transcripts of the programs in different languages.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the A/V presentation to answer any questions, or to repeat information.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities described previously, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already mentioned, here is another consideration for older adult visitors:

- After a film or slide presentation, some visitors may need extra time to allow their eyesight to adjust to the changes in light. Before leaving, take a few minutes to review the presentation they just saw, or use this time for questions and answers. This will give them the additional time they may need.

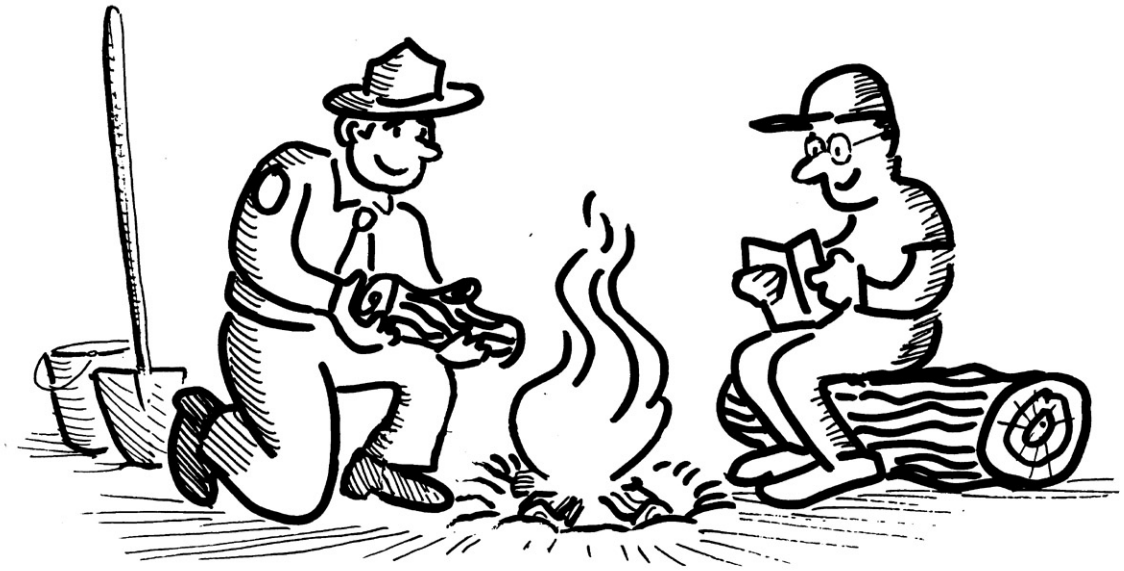
Campfire Programs

Campfire activities evoke the romance and nostalgia of the Old West and the distant past. When we share stories around a nighttime fire, we may be moved by deep memories of our species surviving thousands of generations through such rituals. The comforting, relaxing, and informal qualities of campfire activities make many visitors especially receptive to new ideas, particularly concerning protection of the resources of the park unit they are visiting, and of the world in general. Campfire activities are fun as well as educational; a time for campers and staff to share songs, stories, and jokes and perform silly skits.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in reaching all members of the audience when preparing and delivering campfire programs.

Hearing Impairments

- With such a wide range of hearing capabilities and limitations, it is best to talk with visitors to find out how to suit their needs. Portable assistive listening devices can aid many visitors in hearing your campfire program. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- If requested in advance by a visitor with a hearing impairment, arrange for an oral or sign language interpreter. A spotlight on the sign language interpreter may be needed for a nighttime program. For more information, refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Invite visitors with hearing impairments to sit up front, so they can hear better or see the sign language or oral interpreter, or to facilitate speech-reading.



- Have an outline of your campfire program available, so visitors can more easily follow along. Include song sheets in this handout.
- Speak clearly in your normal tone of voice for your campfire program; only speak louder when it is requested, and then, do not shout. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin to speak, and that everyone has understood before continuing.
- Repeat questions from the audience, and allow sufficient time for the audience to respond. An individual with a hearing impairment may understand the verbal exchange a few seconds later because the sign language interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Try to use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure is best, because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example say, "James Marshall discovered gold," not, "Gold was discovered by James Marshall."
- Challenge groups doing skits to pantomime their messages instead of talking.
- During a slide program, have extra time between slides for visitors to see the images you just described. While other visitors are looking at the slides as you speak, visitors with hearing impairments are speech-reading, or are watching the oral or sign language interpreter. For more information, refer to the Audio-Visual Programs section on page 49.
- Project title slides or song slides on the A/V screen during your campfire program. This will help visitors in following along in the program.
- For the A/V portion of the campfire program, offer transcripts of a film or video that is not captioned.
- Position yourself so you are facing a light source. This allows visitors to see your face and will help facilitate speech-reading.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking as this may distract the visitor from speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts. Include these words with definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject.

Learning Disabilities

- Inform the audience of the campfire program's length, if an intermission can be expected, and the location of the exits. Some individuals with learning disabilities have shorter attention spans and may not wish to stay for the entire program. Do not be insulted if some visitors leave after the warm-up and before the formal presentation begins.
- Program content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin to speak, and that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Pose questions to the entire audience to encourage involvement.
- Repeat questions from the audience.

- Allow enough time for the audience to answer questions.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with visitors' abilities to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Make smooth transitions in presentations; jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Discuss ideas in basic terms; avoid abstractions. Information should be delivered in short, organized segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Encourage audience participation, and incorporate items that may be touched, heard, smelled, or tasted pertaining to the theme of the campfire program. Information provided in a variety of ways reinforces learning and increases interest in your program. However, be careful not to "over-stimulate" visitors with an overload of visual, auditory, or tactile stimulation, which can easily confuse some individuals.
- Skits and songs with hand and body motions are a great way to involve the audience. Do not assume visitors with disabilities cannot or do not want to participate; let them make the decision.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical and calendar time. If such information is included in your campfire presentation, use different ways of describing or demonstrating it.
- Explain unfamiliar words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for further reading. Visitors may wish to learn more about the subjects presented during the campfire program.

Mental Retardation

- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning the warm-up. If part of the program is missed, visitor interest may be lost altogether.
- Be aware that some audience members may not wish to stay for the entire length of the campfire program. Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans. Do not be insulted if some visitors wish to leave after the warm-up and before the formal presentation begins.
- Give information in small, organized segments, and reinforce it through repetition. Too much information may be overwhelming, causing some visitors to lose interest.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting to visitors.
- Repeat questions from the audience. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten it, or may not have been paying attention.
- Allow enough time for the audience to answer your question. Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Try to ask open-ended questions, with neither right nor wrong answers. Give immediate positive feedback to visitors.
- Do not immediately dismiss a question as being irrelevant. Sometimes, poor language skills confuse what the individual may be trying to say. Try your best to relate the question or answer to the subject.

- Relate new information to something familiar to your audience.
- Encourage audience participation. If an individual with mental retardation is left with "empty time," he or she may lose interest and may become disruptive. It is important that you demonstrate any activity or concept before asking the audience to participate. A song with hand and body motions is one way to involve the audience, but make sure everyone understands the movements before beginning.
- Choose campfire program activities that involve partners and that do not single out individuals. Some individuals may not want to become involved due to fear of embarrassment. Positive reinforcement may encourage future involvement.
- Present items pertaining to the theme of your campfire program that may be touched, smelled, heard, and tasted. Information provided in a variety of ways reinforces learning and increases interest in your program.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts. Include these new words and their definitions in a handout. Some visitors may wish to learn more about the subject presented.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the accessibility of the campfire area. Stairs, curbs, steep slopes, and slippery surfaces may pose difficulty to visitors with mobility impairments. Trails leading to the campfire area should be accessible by wheelchair. When publicizing the campfire program, be sure to indicate the accessibility of the campfire area. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section, beginning on page 125 for more information. Obtain a copy of the ADA Accessibility Guidelines, *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*, and *California State Accessibility Standards* for additional information and requirements.
- During your campfire program, present a film or a slide show of areas not easily accessible by people with mobility impairments. For example, provide an A/V program about wilderness or underwater landscapes.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors in wheelchairs. Show objects at the eye level for people in wheelchairs. Remember that some individuals are unable to look up or down for long periods of time.
- Do not exclude people using communication boards or books from discussions. Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question or make a comment before asking them to respond, and be sure to give them the extra time they may need.
- When incorporating items that may be touched into your campfire program, be aware of the audience's capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold the object for the visitors, while they look at it.
- If you have a visitor who is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before you begin speaking.
- Offer to have park staff escort any visitors who request assistance returning to their campsites.

Visual Impairments

- Locate any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered en route to the campfire center, and remove them, if possible. Inform visitors of any obstacles prior to their attendance. Guiding visitors to the seating area may be helpful. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique section on page 35 for tips on assisting people with visual impairments.
- Be alert to the individual needs of visitors with visual impairments. Recommend to visitors with visual impairments that they sit up close to the front, so they can view the program more easily.
- Wait for the audience to settle before talking. Excessive noise can be very distracting.
- Be familiar with different methods of describing historical and natural settings. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35.
- Use descriptive language during your program. Emphasize textures and colors of objects or the topography of areas; otherwise, they could be overlooked. For example, during a slide presentation, have the audience close their eyes while you describe a slide to them. Then, let them open their eyes and see the image. Next, ask an audience member to describe another slide to the group. The first picture could be a panoramic shot like a mountain landscape, and the second could be a close up of an object, such as a water droplet. It will be fun to hear the different descriptions and then the audience's reactions when the image is finally revealed.
- Incorporate sensory activities into your campfire program. One way is to have everyone close their eyes and listen to the sounds of the night.
- Written materials supplied to the audience, such as song sheets, should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font is recommended) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- Offer to have park staff escort any visitors who request assistance back to their campsites.

Limited English Proficiency

- If possible, plan to have a bilingual interpreter present the campfire program, if visitor demand warrants it.
- Repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey interpretive information.
- Pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some visitors who have limited English proficiency. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. If necessary, draw pictures to communicate interpretive information.
- Challenge groups doing skits to pantomime their messages instead of talking.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, as they may not be understood by all visitors.

- Prepare photographs, slides, objects, and other visual and tactile examples to illustrate interpretive information.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause unnecessary embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials, explain it for those who may not be able to read it. If possible, also have copies of those materials available in different languages.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the campfire program, to answer any questions, or to repeat information.
- If you are aware of a group of foreign visitors with limited English proficiency, try to speak with them before the program begins, and ask if they have any native songs or games they would like to share with the group during the warm-up. This will involve these visitors, while adding a multi-cultural experience to your campfire program.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities described previously, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already mentioned, here are further considerations for older adult visitors:

- The campfire area's low light levels may create difficulty for some visitors in seeing. If you are planning on distributing written materials to your audience, remind visitors in the program announcement to bring flashlights with them to the campfire.
- As the visitors arrive or during the warm-up, you may wish to ask the audience if anyone has any early childhood memories or stories of state parks they would like to share. Some older adults may have fascinating stories of their first experiences in parks many years ago.
- Offer to have park staff assist visitors returning to their campsites after the campfire program. Some visitors may have difficulty finding their campsites in the dark.

Environmental Living and Studies Programs

Many state park units work with local school systems to develop school programs involving the resources of state parks. Environmental Living Programs provide children overnight park experiences that explore the interaction between people and their environment. Immersed for a brief time in the past, students learn from their own experiences about earlier cultures and lifestyles. When providing an environmental living program for a group that may include children with disabilities, speak with their teacher, parent, or guardian, and ask he or she about any individual needs you should be made aware of that may affect the presentation of your program, their overnight stay, or an emergency situation.

ESPs have similar goals to ELPs but are organized without the overnight stay. Both are equally structured to provide the most informative experience in the allotted time, focusing on the unit's interpretive themes, as well as being coordinated with concepts

taught in the classroom. The programs incorporate demonstrations, hands-on activities, and follow-up student assignments. As with living history programs, interpreters in period attire add a heightened sense of historic realism to many of these programs. In some cases, the students also dress in period attire when they play historic roles.

Before all Environmental Studies Programs (ESP) or Environmental Living Programs (ELP), the teacher should be given an outline of the content to be covered and the vocabulary pertaining to your theme. This way he/she can pre-teach the students so they will already be familiar with the words and concepts before they arrive at your site.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in developing and presenting ELPs and ESPs that will be enjoyable for all participants.

Hearing Impairments

- Meet with visitors or their parents or guardians prior to their arrival to ask how to best suit their individual needs. With the wide range of hearing impairments, many options for assistance are possible.
- Provide an amplification system to improve communication between you and your visitors. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- If requested in advance by a visitor with a hearing impairment, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter to assist you during the ELP or ESP. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 prior to the program.
- In addition to having an audible building alarm system, sleeping facilities must have a visual emergency alarm installed, or must have a standard 110 volt electrical receptacle into which an alarm can be connected, and the means by which a signal from the building's emergency alarm system can trigger an auxiliary visual alarm. (ADAAG, 4.28.4). A local organization for people with hearing impairments will have more information on visual alarms. Refer to the Resource Directory on page 169 for a listing of regional offices.
- Invite children with hearing impairments to sit in the front of the group, so they can hear better, speech-read, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for your ELP or ESP presentations and discussions.
- Provide an outline of your program, so children can more easily follow along.
- Always face the group and the light source when you speak. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it may become difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- When presenting your program, speak in your normal tone of voice and volume. Do not assume you need to shout at children who are hearing impaired. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Speak louder only when it is requested.

- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak, and that everyone has understood before continuing.
- Try to use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure is best, because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example, say, "Most of the buildings at Fort Tejon were constructed of adobe bricks," not, "Adobe bricks were used to construct most of the buildings at Fort Tejon."
- When showing the group an object or demonstrating a craft and discussing it at the same time, allow extra time for the group to see what you have just described. Although some children can look at an object as you talk about it, children with hearing impairments may be speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter. Position yourself so the group can see you and the object of discussion at the same time. When working with a sign language or oral interpreter, place the object between the two of you.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may distract the child from speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Repeat questions from the group, and allow time for the children to respond to your questions. A child with a hearing impairment may understand the questions a few seconds later, because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts used in the ELP or ESP. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject.

Learning Disabilities

- Ask the teacher, parent, or guardian which specific learning disabilities are present, so you can understand the best way to communicate with the individuals in the group.
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- Prepare visual, tactile, and audible materials pertaining to the theme of the ELP or ESP and distribute them prior to the program. This acquaints the children with the subject matter and also with unfamiliar words that may be used during the program.
- Select areas with minimal background noises and few distractions for ELP or ESP presentations or discussions.
- Keep the group small. It is helpful to work one-on-one as much as possible.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak, and that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Too much information may "over-stimulate" an individual with a learning disability, causing confusion and disinterest. Keep the ESP or ELP program limited to one or two primary ideas and remember to stay focused on the theme.
- The content of the ELP or ESP need not be lowered, just communicated in several ways. Use a variety of media to convey the interpretive information. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas may all add to verbal explanations.

- Involve all the senses in your program. Incorporate interpretive materials pertaining to the theme of your program that may be smelled, heard, touched, and tasted. Information provided in this way reinforces learning and increases interest in your program. For example, Sutter's Fort State Historic Park offers many activities for the children to participate in throughout their stay, including candle making, bread and tortilla making, butter making, raw wool spinning, and weaving.
- Highlight the colors, textures, sounds, and smells of objects. Discuss their important characteristics individually; otherwise, they may be overlooked.
- Pose questions to the group to encourage everyone's involvement.
- Repeat questions from the children.
- Allow enough time for the group to respond to questions.
- Look for children to indicate they wish to respond to a question, before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with a child's ability to answer questions. Calling on an individual when he or she is not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Provide smooth transitions in presentations; jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Discuss ideas in basic terms, and avoid abstractions. Organize information in a logical fashion. Deliver it in short segments, and reinforce it through repetition.
- Some children with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concepts of historical or calendar time. Use different methods to explain or demonstrate it. Relate time to something more familiar in their lives, like their age. For example, say, "If you were born during the Gold Rush, you would be about 150 years old today."
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
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- Explain unfamiliar words and concepts. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject. Children may wish to learn more about the subjects presented in the ELP or ESP.

Mental Retardation

- Ask the teacher, parent, or guardian about any individual needs of which you should be aware.
- Select areas with minimal background noises and few distractions for discussions and presentations.
- Show children a map of the area indicating where activities will take place and where they will be sleeping. This will help them to become more familiar with their surroundings.
- Have everyone's attention before beginning to speak. If part of the discussion is missed, interest may be lost altogether.
- Provide information in small, organized segments. Too much information may be overwhelming, causing some children to lose interest. Keep the program limited to one or two primary ideas and stay focused on the theme.

- Avoid sweeping arm movements or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Repeat questions from the group. Some children may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten it, or may not have been paying attention.
- Allow enough time for the group to answer your question. Look for children to indicate that they wish to respond before calling on them. Try to ask open-ended questions with neither right nor wrong answers. Offer immediate positive feedback to the children.
- Do not immediately dismiss a question as being irrelevant. Sometimes poor language skills confuse what an individual is trying to say. Try to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Demonstrate the activity or task before asking program participants to perform it.
- Do not talk as you demonstrate an activity or object. The group will be concentrating on your movements or the object, and not on your words. Speak before or after the demonstration.
- Relate new information to the children's lives and then reinforce this information through repetition.
- Encourage every child to participate. If a child with mental retardation is left with "empty time," he or she may lose interest and may become disruptive.
- In some instances you may need to remind the group of the park's or program's rules, and what can or cannot be touched.
- Choose ELP or ESP activities involving partners that do not single out individuals. Some children may not want to participate, fearing embarrassment. Positive reinforcement from you may encourage future involvement.
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts used in the ELP or ESP. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject.
- Incorporate items pertaining to the theme of your program that may be touched, heard, smelled, and tasted. Information presented in a variety of ways can reinforce learning and increase interest in your program. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas add another dimension to verbal explanation.
- Remind children to handle objects with care. If you are concerned that the objects may be dropped or mishandled, hold the objects yourself or pass around only non-breakable items.

Mobility Impairments

- Refer to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and *California State Accessibility Standards* for requirements on sleeping accommodations that should be applied to ELP activities.
- Arrange to have first-floor sleeping accommodations for all ELP participants. If this is not possible, be sure that individuals with mobility impairments can be accommodated on the first floor.

- Beforehand, evaluate the access to areas where you plan to provide activities or presentations. Raised or narrow entrances and stairs may pose problems for children with mobility impairments. Walk the area and look for any barriers or other difficulties which may be encountered. Plan for your program to be presented in areas that are accessible to the entire group. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section on page 125, the ADA Accessibility Guidelines, *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*, and *California State Accessibility Standards* for more information.
- Make sure emergency evacuation routes are accessible to all visitors.
- If all attempts to make an area of the park site accessible are unsuccessful, provide a film, slide show, or photographs of those public areas not accessible by wheelchair. (ADA, 35.150). In addition, provide objects or replicas of artifacts from an area or room not accessible for the children to see and/or touch. For example, many second-story rooms of historic buildings are not accessible to individuals using wheelchairs. The park unit should offer visitors a look at a video, photographs, or slides of the room, along with actual objects or replicas from the room.
- Provide seating with backs and armrests. Remember, not all children are able to sit on the floor, or able to get up and down from that position easily. For outside programs, seating in the shade is preferred. Some children with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature and may be susceptible to heat-related ailments.
- If a child is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before you begin speaking.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors using wheelchairs. Show objects at their eye level. Some individuals have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time. Mirrors can be used to assist individuals looking up at high places, such as the top of a historic building or a flag raised high on a pole.
- When incorporating items that may be touched into your programs, be aware of individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold objects for the child, while they touch or look at it.
- If you are pushing a child using a wheelchair, do not deliver program information while walking. This individual may not hear you. It may be necessary to seek assistance from another staff member to push the wheelchair, while you present your program.
- Do not exclude children using communication books or boards from discussions. Look for an indication that they wish to respond and then give them the time they need to formulate their message.

Visual Impairments

- Inform your visitors about the location of restroom facilities near the sleeping area. Make sure a staff member is available to assist, if needed. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique section on page 35 for tips on guiding visitors with visual impairments.
- If fire or other emergency alarms are required in the sleeping area, be sure they are audible as well as visual and that they are working properly. Inform all visitors of

evacuation routes, and walk the evacuation route with visitors who are visually impaired.

- Evaluate the area where the ELP or ESP will take place. Look for any obstacles or protruding objects which may be encountered by children with visual impairments, and inform them of their location.
- When the group arrives, take the time to describe the area in detail to children with visual impairments. Include in your description textures, colors, and sizes of buildings, trees, and other important features. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for ELP or ESP discussions and presentations.
- Provide a tactile relief map of the facility and/or area so children with visual impairments can become oriented to their surroundings.
- Be alert to the individual needs of children with visual impairments. Allow them to sit or stand close to the front, so they can see you or the objects of discussion more easily.
- Provide adequate lighting for reading, drawing, or craft activities.
- Wait for the children to settle before speaking. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Always talk facing the group and the light source.
- Give clear, verbal direction to the group when moving from one area to another. Once at your destination, provide a general orientation to the whole area, including atmosphere and visual details.
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
- Magnifiers should be available to use on photographs, signs, or exhibits, or to take on outdoor walks. The whole group can benefit and enjoy hand lenses by taking a closer look at the detail of some historic or natural objects.
- Use enlarged photographs to allow children to see more detail.
- Take a moment to listen to the sounds and to smell the fragrances of the area. Be aware of sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore, especially during cooking activities. Discuss what you hear and smell. Encourage the entire group to use their other senses, in addition to sight.
- Use life-size or scale models of objects that may not be touched.
- When demonstrating a skill, have a child with a visual impairment hold your hands as you work; at the same time, explain in detail what you are doing.
- Handouts supplied to the group, such as role-playing cards or game sheets, should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- Offer an additional reading list pertaining to the theme of the ELP or ESP. The participants may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement their visit.

Limited English Proficiency

- Talk with the teacher or parent and arrange for a language translator to be present during the ELP or ESP if needed. When working with a translator, speak at a moderately slow pace, speak in short sentences, and pause occasionally to let the translator and listeners “catch up.”
- If necessary, pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some children who have limited English proficiency. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. Draw pictures, if needed, to communicate interpretive information.
- Prepare photographs, slides, objects, and other visual and tactile examples to illustrate interpretive information.
- Repeat the program information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey interpretive information.
- Point to the objects to which you are referring.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Look for children to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials, explain them for those who may not be able to read.
- If the number of ELP or ESP participants warrants it, have copies of written materials available in different languages.

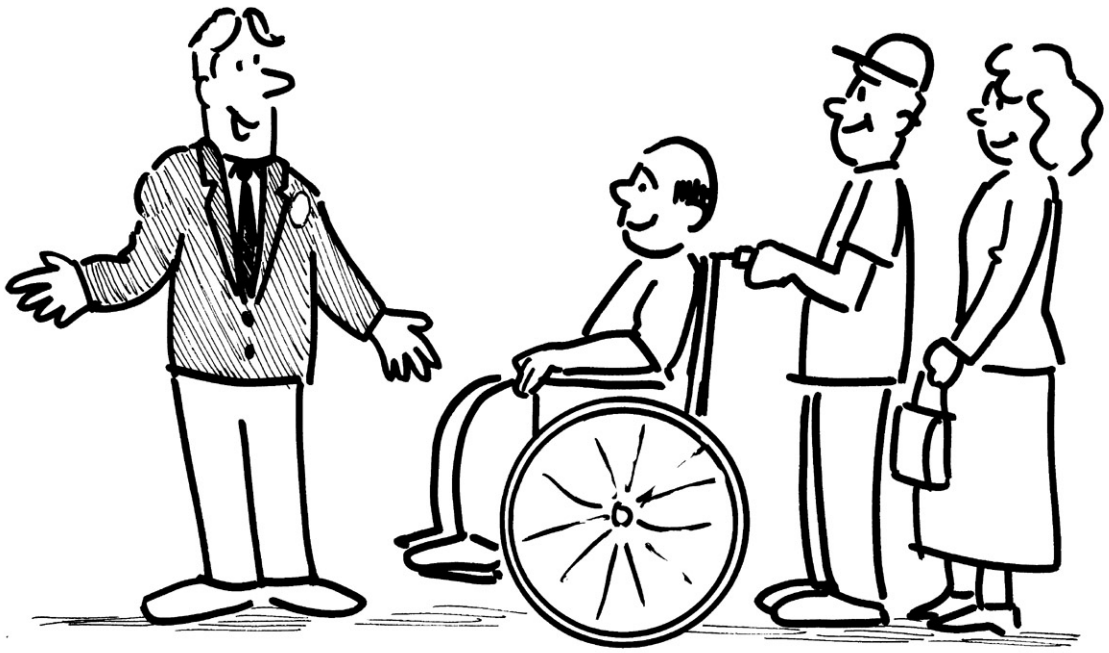
Guided Walks, Tours and Talks

Guided walks, tours, and talks are highly effective interpretive media, because they bring together a skilled interpreter, interested visitors, and valued cultural or natural resources. A park experience with an interpreter will often be the most rewarding and memorable part of an individual's visit. Guided walks, tours, and talks can make full use of the available resources, while meeting a variety of visitor interests and needs.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering guided walks, tours, and talks for all visitors.

Hearing Impairments

- With the range of hearing capabilities and limitations, it is best to talk with visitors to find out how to best suit their individual needs. Portable assistive listening devices can aid many visitors in hearing your talk. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- If requested in advance by a visitor, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.



- Invite visitors with hearing impairments to be in front of the group so they can hear better, speech-read, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated. Governor's Mansion State Historic Park and units in the Santa Cruz District have docents trained to give tours in sign language.
- If possible, select areas with minimal background noise for your walk, tour, or talk.
- Always face the audience when you speak. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it is very difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- Speak in your normal tone and volume during your program. Do not assume you need to shout for visitors who are hearing impaired. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Speak louder only when it is requested.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning the talk or tour. Also, periodically check to see that everyone has understood before continuing.
- Provide an outline of your tour, so visitors can more easily follow along.
- Before beginning the walk or tour, describe the route that will be taken, and give a brief overview of the resources that will be interpreted along the way.
- Always position yourself so that you are facing a light source and the audience when you are speaking. This will allow visitors to see your face and speech-read.
- Try to use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure is best, because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example, "The flowers are blooming on the mountain," not, "On the mountain the flowers are blooming."
- When showing visitors an object and discussing it at the same time, allow extra time for them to see what you have described. Although some visitors can look at an object as you talk about it, visitors with hearing impairments may need to watch the sign language or oral interpreter, or they may be speech-reading. Try to position yourself so that visitors can see you, as well as the object under discussion, at the same time. When working with a sign language or oral interpreter, place the object between the two of you.
- Point to objects to which you are referring. Visual cues, like this, will help visitors to better understand your talk.
- Be aware of textures, colors, or smells you might otherwise ignore. Encourage the entire group to be more aware of their senses. Take a moment to smell the fragrances of the area, or to feel the textures of objects. Discuss what you smell or touch.
- Avoid sweeping arm movements or moving around while speaking. This may distract visitors who are speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Repeat questions from the audience and allow sufficient time for the audience to respond. An individual with a hearing impairment may understand the question a few seconds later, because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts. Include these words and definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject.

Learning Disabilities

- Be aware that everyone may not wish to stay for the entire guided walk or tour, as some individuals with learning disabilities have shorter attention spans. Prior arrangements may need to be made to have park staff escort individuals back to the starting point.
- Before beginning the walk or tour, describe the route that will be taken and give a brief overview of the resources that will be interpreted along the way. This will increase anticipation and interest in your program.
- Provide a tactile relief map of the area. This involves the senses of touch and sight, while allowing visitors to see where they are going on their tour or walk.
- Keep the tour group small. It is helpful to work one-on-one as much as possible.
- Select areas with minimal background noise and distractions to speak to the group during a guided walk, tour, or talk.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak. Also, periodically check to see that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" the audience. An overload of visual, tactile, or auditory stimulation can easily confuse some individuals.
- Too much information may cause confusion and could result in disinterest in the tour or talk. Keep the program focused around your theme.
- Program content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways. Use several types of media to convey the interpretive information. Models, specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas all add another dimension to verbal explanation.
- Involve all the senses in your tour or talk. Incorporate items pertaining to the theme of your program that may be smelled, heard, touched, or tasted. Information presented in a variety of ways reinforces learning and increases interest in your program.
- Be aware of sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore. Encourage the entire group to be more aware of their senses. Take a moment to listen to the sounds and to smell the fragrances of the area. Discuss what you hear and smell.
- Individualize color, texture, sound, or the smell of an object. Discuss the important characteristics individually; otherwise, they may be overlooked.
- Pose questions to the entire tour group to encourage everyone's involvement.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Allow enough time for the tour group to ask or to respond to questions.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with visitors' abilities to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause unnecessary embarrassment.
- Create smooth transitions in presentations; jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.

- Try to discuss concepts and ideas in basic terms; avoid abstractions. Group information logically. It should be conveyed in short segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical and calendar time. If this information is included in your tour or talk, use different ways to explain or demonstrate it.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject. Visitors may wish to increase their understanding or learn more about the subjects presented during the walk, tour, or talk. Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument (Hearst Castle) has a printed brochure of historical information available on request.
- If your audience is a group of people with learning disabilities, you may want to keep your tour to 30 minutes or less.

Mental Retardation

- If possible, select areas with minimal background noise and distractions to speak to the group during the tour or talk. Shasta State Historic Park staff tries to minimize noise and distractions from busy Highway 299 by taking the group inside the museum for the tour's introduction.
- Keep the size of the tour group small.
- It may be necessary to remind the tour group of the park's or museum's rules.
- Provide visitors with a simple map of the area or floor plan(s) of the building, indicating where you will go and what you will see while on tour. This will stimulate curiosity and interest in your program.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning the tour or talk. If part of the discussion is missed, interest in your program may be lost altogether.
- Be aware that everyone may not wish to stay for the entire tour or talk. Do not be insulted if a few people leave before the end of your program. Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans. Prior arrangements may need to be made for park staff to escort individuals back to the starting place.
- Provide information in small, organized segments and reinforce it through repetition. Too much information can be overwhelming and may cause some visitors to loose interest.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Repeat questions from the tour group. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention.
- Be sure to allow enough time for the group to answer your questions. Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Try to ask open-ended questions with no right or wrong answers. Offer immediate, positive feedback to the visitors.

- Do not automatically dismiss a question or an answer as being irrelevant. Sometimes poor language skills confuse what the individual is trying to say. Do your best to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Where possible during the tour or talk, demonstrate the activity or concept, allow visitors to participate, relate information to their lives, and then reinforce the information through repetition.
- Encourage audience participation. Some individuals with mental retardation, if left with "empty time," can lose interest, and may become disruptive.
- Be aware of the sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore. Encourage the entire group to be more aware of their senses. Take a moment to listen to the sounds and smell the fragrances of the area. Discuss what you hear and smell.
- Choose activities that involve partners and that do not single out individuals. Some individuals may not want to become involved through fear of embarrassment. Your positive reinforcement may encourage their future involvement.
- Take along items pertaining to the theme of your tour or talk that may be touched, heard, smelled, or tasted. Information provided in a variety of ways reinforces learning and increases interest in your program. Models, specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas add another dimension to verbal explanation.
- When incorporating objects that can be touched into your tour, remind everyone to handle the objects with care. If you are concerned about them being dropped or mishandled, hold the objects yourself, or pass around only non-breakable items.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject. Visitors may wish to increase their understanding or learn more about the subjects presented during the walk, tour, or talk.
- If the tour group consists entirely of people with mental retardation and is prearranged, find out you visitors' interests. Consider planning a tour of no longer than 30 minutes, based on their interests.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the access to the site proposed for your talk or to the area you plan to tour. Stairs, curbs, and slippery surfaces may prove hazardous for visitors with mobility impairments. Check the route for any barriers or other difficulties, including slopes that may be encountered. Plan a route that is accessible for the entire audience. Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park has a hard surface trail to a ramp around a large redwood tree. This provides access for visitors with mobility and visual impairments, without encountering the tree's exposed roots or other hazards. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section on page 125 for information on the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*.
- When publicizing the guided walk, tour, or talk, be sure to indicate the accessibility of the area, the difficulty of the walk, and the length of the program.
- As stated in the Introduction, there must always be a priority to make park sites accessible. If access is not feasible, alternatives should be considered. These include portrayal in film, slide show, or audio-visual relay.

- It is also helpful to provide exhibit objects or replicas of artifacts from inaccessible areas or rooms for the visitors to see and/or touch.
- At the beginning of your tour or walk, discuss any obstacles that may be encountered.
- Prearranged rest breaks should be announced at the beginning of the tour, and additional breaks should be accommodated, if requested. Also, inform the group of the location or absence of restrooms and drinking fountains along the tour.
- Allow visitors to leave the tour early, or make prior arrangements to have a staff member escort them back to the starting point. Some visitors may find long walks or tours too strenuous. Long talks could also be a problem for individuals who are unable to sit for extended periods of time.
- Offer an optional “leisure tour,” a separate tour available to anyone who wants to proceed at a slower pace.
- Offer self-guided printed or audio tours for those who wish to proceed at their own pace.
- If the tour group includes a visitor who is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before speaking.
- Place seats with backs and armrests along routes used for long tours or walks. For outdoor programs, seating with shade is preferred, as some people with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature and may easily suffer from heat-related ailments.
- During walks or tours, allow extra time between points of interest or exhibits. People with assistive mobility devices may require additional time to move about.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors in wheelchairs and present objects at eye level to them. Remember, some individuals may be unable to look up or down for long periods of time.
- When incorporating items that may be touched into your tour program, be aware of individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold the object for the visitor, while they examine it.
- If you are pushing a visitor in a wheelchair during a tour, do not deliver tour information while walking. This individual may not hear you when you are behind him/her. It may be necessary to seek assistance from another staff member to push the wheelchair while you speak to the entire group.

Visual Impairments

- Be aware of any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered during your tour. Inform visitors of the obstacles at the beginning of your tour or walk. You or another staff member may be requested to guide a visitor with a visual impairment. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique on page 35 for tips on assisting people with visual impairments.
- Meet with visitors who are visually impaired before the tour or walk begins, and ask if there is anything they would like described to them.
- Before beginning the tour or walk, describe the route that will be taken and give a brief overview of the resources that will be interpreted along the way. Provide a

tactile relief map of the facility and/or area so visitors can more easily become oriented with their surroundings.

- Select areas with minimal background noise when speaking during the guided walk, tour, or talk.
- Wait for the audience to settle before talking. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Be alert to the individual needs of visitors with visual impairments. Allow individuals to sit or stand at the front of the tour group so they can see you or the object of discussion more easily.
- Be aware of lighting conditions and, where possible, minimize glares on glass.
- Always talk facing the group and a light source.
- Give clear verbal direction to the tour group when moving from one area to another. Once at your destination, provide a general orientation to the whole area, including ambiance and visual details.
- Read aloud exhibit text or wayside trail signage.
- Use descriptive language during your talk; emphasize textures, colors, topography, etc. Be familiar with different methods of describing historical and natural settings and objects. Verbal description plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for further information.
- Magnifiers should be available to use on photographs, signs, or exhibits, or to take on outdoor walks for a closer inspection of natural materials.
- Offer enlarged photographs to allow all visitors to see more detail.
- Be aware of sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore. Encourage the entire group to be more aware of their senses. Take a moment to listen to the sounds and smell the fragrances of the area. Discuss what you hear and smell. Mel Kutsch, a State Park Ranger I at Columbia State Historic Park, suggests night hikes as a way to emphasize the other senses.
- For tours or talks, have either life-size or scaled-down models available of objects that are not to be touched. The National Park Service, for example, has a life-size model of the Statue of Liberty's foot for people to touch in their visitor center at the Statue of Liberty.
- Handouts supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille. The California State Capitol Museum has a Braille brochure describing each floor of the Capitol building.
- Offer an additional reading list pertaining to the walk, tour, or talk. Visitors may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement their visit.
- Offer guided tours in lieu of self-guided tours, for those who request it.

Limited English Proficiency

- Provide visitors with a simple map of the area or floor plan(s) of the buildings indicating where you will go and what you will see. This helps visitors to follow the tour when they cannot understand verbal directions.

- If the audience warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter present the program.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate for you during the tour or talk. Ask that the translating be done at the rear of the audience (away from the guide) if the translating is being done for a portion of the group. If you think that will be too disruptive, arrange for a private tour.
- Pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some visitors who have limited English proficiency. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. If needed, draw pictures to communicate the interpretive information.
- Point to objects to which you are referring. This provides a visual cue to help visitors understand your talk.
- Prepare photographs, slides, objects, and other visual and tactile examples to illustrate interpretive information.
- Repeat the program's material in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey the interpretive information.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang, as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read it.
- Have copies of handouts made available in different languages if the park's visitation warrants it.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the walk, tour, or talk to answer any questions, or to repeat information.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities previously mentioned, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already mentioned, here are further considerations for older adult visitors.

- Prearranged rest breaks should be announced at the beginning of the tour, and additional breaks should be accommodated, if requested. Also, inform the audience of the location or absence of restrooms along the tour.
- Low light levels in some areas on the tour may create hazardous situations. Some older adults may need extra time to allow their eyes to adjust to drastic changes in light levels. Suggest that the group stay still while their eyes adjust. Also, remove any potential barriers that may cause accidents in areas where extreme changes in lighting levels occur.
- If you are planning to distribute written materials to your audience, make sure adequate lighting is provided for reading.
- Avoid long or fast-paced walks.
- Provide seating with backs and armrests. While outdoors, route the tour through areas of shade and drinking fountains, or suggest visitors bring water along with them.

Interpretive Demonstrations

Interpreters can effectively show visitors modern recreational skills. They can also present how traditional activities and crafts were produced in the past through live demonstrations. These activities not only help visitors step back into another time, but also bring them closer to other traditions and cultures. It is very important that all techniques be presented properly and as accurately as possible for a particular interpretive period. Examples of live interpretive demonstrations include basket making, beer brewing, bread making and baking, Native Californian skills and crafts, fly tying, fire starting, sign painting, carpentry, gardening, leather working, sewing, weaving, military drills, placer mining, newspaper printing, games, and storytelling, to name a few.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering interpretive demonstrations that will be satisfying and informative for a diverse audience.

Hearing Impairments

- With the range of hearing capabilities and limitations, it is important to talk with visitors to find out how best to meet their needs. Portable assistive listening devices work well during interpretive demonstrations. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.

- If requested in advance by a visitor, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- Provide an outline of your program, possibly including diagrams or drawings representing the series of steps in the demonstration, so visitors can more easily follow along.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for the demonstrations.
- Allow visitors with hearing impairments to sit or stand up front, so that they can hear better, speech-read, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will usually be appreciated.
- Always face the audience when you speak. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it is difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- Always position yourself so that you are facing the light source. This allows visitors to see your face to speech-read.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this distracts visitors from speech-reading, or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Speak in your normal tone and volume during your demonstration. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Speak louder only when you are requested to, and then try not to shout.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin the demonstration. Also, periodically check to see that everyone has understood what was said before continuing.
- Try to use short sentences and a subject-verb-object sentence structure. For example, say, "Acorns were ground to make flour," not, "Flour was made by grinding acorns."
- When showing an object and discussing it at the same time, allow visitors extra time to look over the object just described to them. Often, a closer look or being able to touch an object can replace verbal description. Although some individuals can look at an object as you talk about it, visitors with hearing impairments may be speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter. Try to position yourself so visitors can see you and the object of discussion at the same time. When working with a sign language or oral interpreter, place the object between the two of you.
- Repeat questions from the audience, and allow sufficient time for the audience to respond. An individual with a hearing impairment may understand the question a few seconds later, because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts used in your demonstration. Include these words with definitions in a handout.

Learning Disabilities

- Be aware that not everyone may wish to stay for the entire demonstration, as some individuals with learning disabilities have shorter attention spans. Do not be insulted if visitors leave before the end of your program. If your audience is composed of a

group of people with learning disabilities, you may want to shorten your demonstration to 30 minutes or less.

- Program content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Select areas with minimal background noise and minimal distractions for your demonstration.
- Keep the tour group small. It is helpful to work one-on-one as much as possible.
- Be sure everyone is paying attention before you begin your demonstration, and that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" the audience with too much information, as this may cause confusion and disinterest. Keep the program limited to one or two primary ideas.
- Try to involve all the senses in your program. Incorporate items pertaining to your demonstration that may be touched and passed around. Information provided in a variety of ways reinforces learning and increases interest in your program. For example, allow visitors to feel the materials being used in the demonstration, or let visitors try the demonstration activity themselves.
- Draw attention to the color, texture, sound, or smell of the object(s) being demonstrated. Discuss their important characteristics individually.
- Pose questions to the entire audience to encourage involvement.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Allow enough time for the audience to answer questions. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with the visitor's ability to answer questions.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond when they are not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Make smooth transitions in presentations; jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Try to discuss ideas in basic terms; avoid abstractions. Information should be delivered in short, organized segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical or calendar time. If this information is included in your presentation, offer different ways of explaining or demonstrating it.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts used in your demonstration. Include these words with definitions in a handout.

Mental Retardation

- Select areas with minimal background noise and minimal distractions for your demonstrations.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning the demonstration. If part of the demonstration is missed by the visitor, interest may be lost altogether.
- Be aware that not everyone may wish to stay for the entire demonstration. Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans. Do not be insulted if visitors leave in the middle of your program.

- Provide information in small, organized segments. Too much information may be overwhelming, causing some visitors to lose interest.
- Avoid sweeping arm movements or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Do not talk as you demonstrate an activity or task. The audience may be concentrating on your movements or the object, and not on your words. Give information before or after the demonstration.
- Repeat questions from the audience. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention.
- Be sure to allow enough time for the audience to answer your question. Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Try to ask open-ended questions with neither right nor wrong answers. Give immediate, positive feedback to the visitors.
- Do not immediately dismiss a question as being irrelevant. Sometimes poor language skills confuse what the individual is trying to say. Try your best to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Where possible, involve visitors in your demonstration, relate information to their lives, and then reinforce the information through repetition.
- Encourage audience participation. If individuals with mental retardation are left with "empty time," they could lose interest, and may become disruptive.
- Choose demonstration activities for visitors that involve partners and that do not single out individuals. Some visitors may not want to become involved due to fear of embarrassment. Positive reinforcement may encourage their future involvement.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts used in the demonstration. Include these words with definitions in a handout.
- Try to involve all the senses in your demonstration. Include items pertaining to your demonstration that may be felt, heard, smelled, or tasted.
- When incorporating objects to be touched into your demonstration, remind everyone to handle them with care. If you are concerned that the objects may be dropped or mishandled, hold them yourself or pass around only non-breakable items.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the accessibility of the area where you plan to provide the demonstration. Stairs, curbs, and slippery surfaces may prove difficult for visitors with mobility impairments. Plan a route that is accessible for the entire audience. When publicizing the program, indicate the area's accessibility. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section, beginning on page 125 for information on the ADA Accessibility Guidelines and Access to Park Guidelines.
- According to federal law, state parks must provide a film, a slide show, or photographs of the demonstration, if it is held in an area not accessible by wheelchair. (ADA 35.150). In addition, display objects or replicas of artifacts from the demonstration (and/or inaccessible area or room) for visitors to see and/or touch.

- Provide seating with backs and armrests for demonstrations expected to last longer than ten minutes. For outdoor programs, seating with shade is preferred, as some people with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature, and could easily suffer from heat-related ailments.
- If you have a visitor who is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before beginning the demonstration.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors using wheelchairs or other assistive devices. Always present objects at eye level. Remember, some individuals may not be able to look up or down for long periods of time.
- When incorporating items that may be touched in your demonstration, be aware of individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold the object for visitors while they touch or look at it.

Visual Impairments

- Be aware of any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered en route to the demonstration area by visitors with visual impairments. Inform visitors of the obstacles when they first arrive at the park site. You or another staff member may be requested to guide a visitor with a visual impairment. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique on page 35 for tips on assisting people with visual impairments.
- Meet with visitors who are visually impaired before the demonstration begins and ask if there is anything they would like described to them.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for demonstrations.
- Be alert to the individual needs of visitors with visual impairments. Allow them to sit or stand up close, so they can see you and the demonstration more easily.
- Be aware of lighting conditions. Bright, even light should be provided.
- Always talk facing the group and the light source.
- Wait for the audience to settle before speaking. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- If possible, when demonstrating a skill, allow a visitor with a visual impairment to hold your hands as you work, while at the same time explaining in detail what you are doing.
- Use descriptive language during your demonstration, emphasizing textures, colors, and shapes. Be familiar with different methods for describing historical and natural settings and objects. Verbal description plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35.
- Be conscious of sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore, and discuss them. Encourage the entire group to be aware of all their senses, not just their vision. The smell of the wood stove and baking corn bread, along with free samples, are included in the demonstrations at Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park.
- Have touchable, life-size or scale models of objects similar to those used in the demonstrations available to be touched by visitors.
- Handouts supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are

distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.

- Where possible, provide a reading list pertaining to the demonstration. Visitors may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement their visit.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the demonstration, to answer any questions or to describe anything for them.

Limited English Proficiency

- If the audience warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter present the demonstration.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate for you during the program.
- Pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some visitors who have limited English proficiency. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. If needed, draw pictures to communicate the information.
- Repeat the demonstration's information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey the points.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang, as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials for the demonstration, explain them for those who may not be able to read the materials.
- Have copies of handouts available in different languages, as warranted by visitor interest.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the demonstration, to answer any questions or to repeat information.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities previously mentioned, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already mentioned, here are further considerations for older adult visitors:

- If you are planning to distribute written materials to your audience, make sure adequate lighting is provided for reading. The low light levels of some demonstration areas may create difficulties for some visitors to see.
- Some older adults need extra time to allow their eyes to adjust to rapid changes in light levels. Remove any potential barriers, which could cause accidents, in areas where extreme changes in lighting occurs. Also, consider asking the group to remain seated while allowing their eyes to adjust.

Interpretive Sales and Concessions

Interpretive concessions play an important role in parks by providing needed services to park visitors and by helping to ensure the creation of a “living” historic environment. They can invite visitor involvement, as well as offer lasting mementos of a park experience. In partnership with the state, concessions may enhance the public’s understanding of historic commercial ventures and other park activities. All contracts with concessionaires must include language regarding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Concessionaires must be willing to share their special knowledge and/or skills through their interactions with the public, as well as their merchandise. As with any park interpretation, the basic elements of a historic-style concession need to be as accurate

and authentic as possible, with particular attention given to appropriate furnishings, clothing, merchandising, display techniques, demonstrations, signage, and advertising.

Requirements that tend to screen out individuals with disabilities are prohibited, such as requiring an individual to produce a driver's license as the only means of identification for cashing a check.

The following suggestions are provided to assist concessionaires in communicating with and serving park visitors.

Hearing Impairments

- Provide adequate lighting in the concession for speech-reading. When speaking, position yourself to face the light source and the visitor.
- Speak clearly to customers and in a normal tone of voice. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Talk louder only when asked to do so and then try not to shout.
- If possible, try to speak with customers who have hearing impairments in areas of relative quiet.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions and moving around while speaking, as this may distract visitors from speech-reading. Do not turn away while talking, as this makes speech-reading impossible.
- Position yourself so that customers can see you and any merchandise or objects you may be discussing at the same time. This allows them to speech-read while focusing on the object at the same time.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Keep paper and pencils handy and use them to assist communication when a sign language or oral interpreter is not available.
- Provide printed descriptions of historic or unfamiliar objects displayed in the store in the form of an exhibit or pamphlet. A preprinted explanation is one way to reply to the question, "What is that?"
- Be sure to allow an ample amount of time for customers to respond to your questions. They may be speech-reading, or watching a sign language or oral interpreter.
- Provide a portable amplification system. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.

Learning Disabilities

- Interpretive information need not be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Be aware that individuals with perceptual problems or lack of coordination may have difficulty holding small items.
- If possible, offer merchandise that involves the use of the senses. For example, foods (dried foods and non-perishables work best) that can be smelled and tasted (if

samples are offered), and clothes or shoes that can be touched. Some occasions may also call for period music to be played.

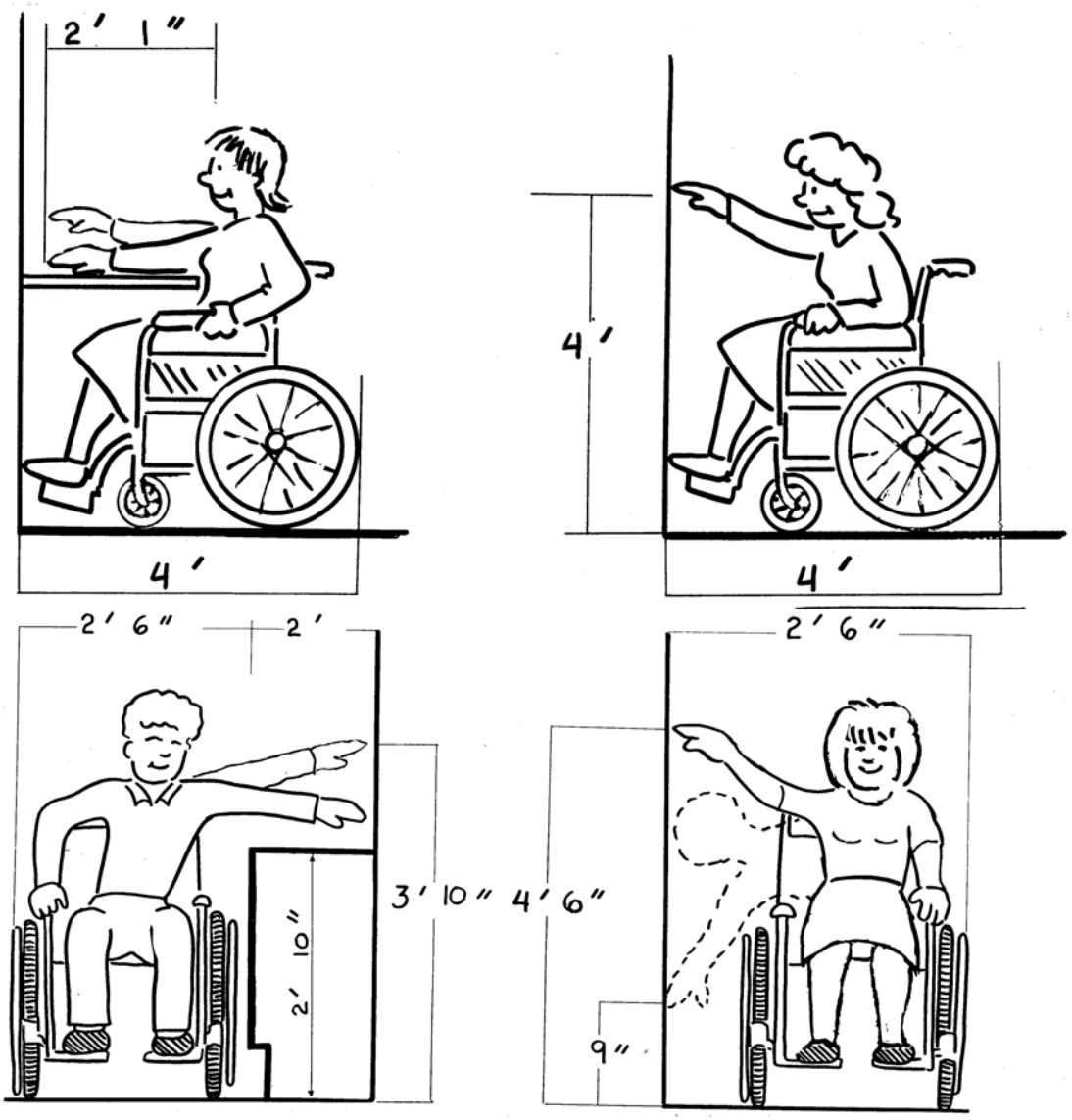
- Avoid "over-stimulating" customers; too much noise or too many activities may cause confusion.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities may have difficulty understanding the concept of historical or calendar time. Try to explain or demonstrate this concept in different ways.
- If printed materials are available to customers, explain their content for those who may be unable to read them.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts. Discuss ideas in basic terms, avoiding abstractions. Relate the information to something more familiar to visitors.

Mental Retardation

- You may need to tell customers of the concession's rules. For example, explain which items may or may not be touched, no running, etc.
- Explain unfamiliar words, concepts, or unusual objects. Discuss ideas in basic terms; avoid abstractions. Relate the information to something more familiar to customers.
- If possible, offer merchandise that involves the use of the senses. For example, foods (dried foods and non-perishables work best) that can be smelled and tasted (if samples are offered), and clothes or shoes that can be touched. Some occasions may also call for period music to be played.
- If printed materials are available to customers, explain their content for those who may be unable to read them.

Mobility Impairments

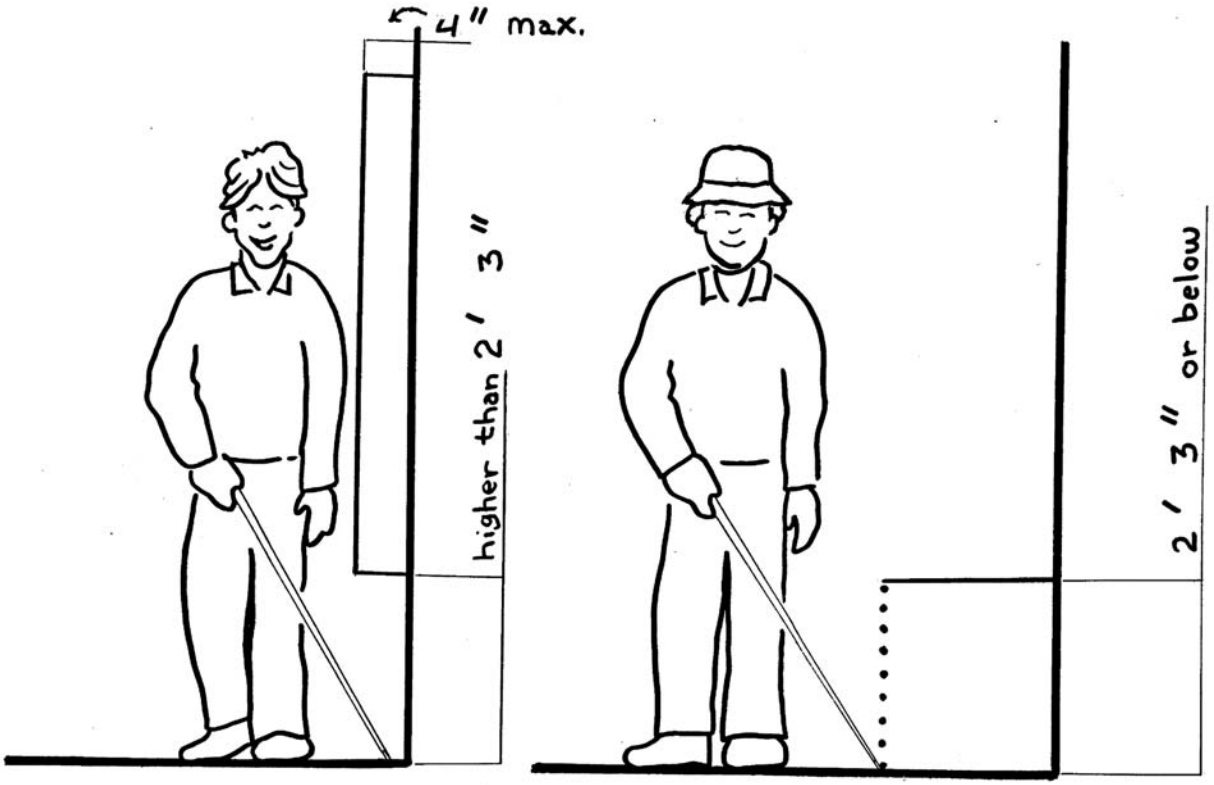
- Evaluate the accessibility of the concession facility and its surroundings. Areas to be aware of include doorways, aisles, stairs, ramps, walkways, the height of objects and signs, the height of counter tops, parking, telephones, restrooms, and drinking fountains. For more information, refer to the Interpretive Facilities section beginning on page 125. The requirements listed in that section will also apply to sales and concession facilities. For complete guidelines, see the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*, *Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines*, and *California State Accessibility Standards*.
- Locate signs at a comfortable viewing height for both standing and seated visitors; between 3'10" and 5'2" above the floor, at a viewing distance of 6' or more.
- Merchandise should be placed so it can be easily reached by people using wheelchairs. See the diagrams on next page.
- Where possible and suitable, provide seating, preferably with armrests and backs. If the concession is outdoors, seating with shade should be provided.
- Try to have staff available to assist customers with mobility impairments.



Visual Impairments

- Offer a general orientation to the sales area for customers with visual impairments. Include the historical ambiance and visual details. If the area is relatively large, provide a simple map or floor plan of the space.
- Be alert to the needs of visitors who are visually impaired. Place merchandise so customers can stand within 3” of it, without encountering any obstacles, including swinging doors. Also, provide sufficient lighting for reading and viewing merchandise.
- Have magnifiers available for customers to use on signs or price tags, or to view merchandise.
- Try to have staff available nearby to assist customers. Be familiar with the Sighted Guide Technique presented on page 31.

- Where possible, offer merchandise for customers to touch. Verbal description plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information.
- Display items that involve the use of the senses. For example, foods (dried foods and non-perishables work best) to smell and taste (if samples are offered), and clothes or shoes that can be touched. Some occasions may also call for period music to be played.
- When demonstrating a skill or craft, have customers with visual impairments hold your hands as you work, at the same time explaining what you are doing.
- Remove objects or merchandise which protrude from walls or store fixtures over 4", and that lie within 27" to 80" above the floor. Objects that are less than 27" from the floor may protrude any length. See diagram below. (ADAAG, 4.4.1).
- Pamphlets, menus, price guides, or other handouts should be produced in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- If appropriate, sell books on tape or in Braille pertaining to the theme of the concession.



Limited English Proficiency

- If warranted by visitation, provide written materials (price guides, menus, historical information, etc.) in different languages.
- If necessary, pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some customers who have limited English proficiency, when you are not familiar with their language. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. Draw pictures, if needed, to communicate the information.
- Point to objects to which you are referring.
- Speak slowly and distinctly.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang as they may not be understood by all customers.
- Repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey messages. Prepare photographs, replicas, or other visual and tactile examples to convey information.
- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them.
- If the concession's services include selling printed materials, consider providing versions in different languages.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities previously described, or none of them. In addition to some of the suggestions already mentioned, here are further considerations for older adult customers.

- Provide adequate lighting for reading signs and seeing merchandise. Some older customers may need extra lighting for reading or seeing small details.
- Some older customers need extra time to allow their eyes to adjust to drastic changes in light levels. For example, when a customer enters a store from the outside during a bright, sunny day they may experience a temporary visual impairment. Remove objects from around the entrance that may pose a hazard in this situation.

Junior Ranger Programs

Junior Rangers is a statewide children's educational program designed for ages 7 to 12 years. Individuals can join the program at one unit, and may continue to participate in Junior Ranger activities as they visit other units of the State Park System. Participation in the program enables children to earn buttons, badges, and certificates, while learning more about the world around them. The program emphasizes the stewardship of park resources, while connecting park resource issues to global concerns. Interpretive activities focus on the topics of geology, Native Californians, history, plant and animal life, energy, water, weather and climate, ecology, safety, survival and crime prevention, and park careers.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering Junior Ranger programs for a diverse audience.

Hearing Impairments

- With the wide range of hearing abilities and limitations, it is best to talk with the child or parent to find out how to suit individual needs. Portable assistive listening devices may aid many visitors in hearing your program. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.

- If requested in advance by a visitor, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- Suggest that children with hearing impairments be placed in front of the group, so they can hear better, speech-read, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for your Junior Ranger program.
- Provide an outline of your program, so children can more easily follow along.
- Always face the group and the light source when you speak. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it may become difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- When presenting your program, speak in your normal tone of voice and volume. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not assume you need to shout at children who are hearing impaired. Speak louder only when it is requested.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak, and that everyone has understood before continuing.
- Try to use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure is best, because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example, say, "The salmon spawn upstream," not, "Upstream is where salmon spawn."
- When showing Junior Rangers an object and discussing it at the same time, allow extra time for the audience to see what you have just described. Although some children can look at an object as you talk about it, children with hearing impairments may be speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter. Position yourself so the group can see you and the object of discussion at the same time. When working with a sign language or oral interpreter, place the object between the two of you.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may distract the child from speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Repeat questions from the group and allow time for the group to respond to your questions. A child with a hearing impairment may understand the questions a few seconds later, because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject.

Learning Disabilities

- Select areas with minimal background noises and few distractions to present your Junior Ranger program.
- Keep the group small. It is helpful to work one-on-one as much as possible.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak and that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Too much information may "over-stimulate" an individual with a learning disability, causing confusion and disinterest. Keep the program limited to one or two primary ideas and remember to stay focused on the theme.

- Junior Ranger program content need not be lowered, just communicated in several ways. Use a variety of media to convey the interpretive information. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas can all add to verbal explanations.
- Involve all the senses in your program. Incorporate interpretive materials that may be smelled, heard, touched, and tasted, pertaining to the theme of your program. Information provided in this way reinforces learning and increases interest in your program. David Milam, a State Park Ranger I at San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area, includes samples of plants used by Native Americans for food and medicine, and suggests the group smell and touch the plants. He also has a replica of a native flute that he plays for his audience.
- Highlight the colors, textures, sounds, and smells of objects. Discuss their important characteristics individually; otherwise, they may be overlooked. Leander Tamoria, a State Park Ranger I at Año Nuevo State Reserve, emphasizes the sounds and smells of elephant seals and provides pieces of molted skin and fur for visitors to feel.
- Offer a tactile relief map of the area that involves the senses of touch and sight. This will allow Junior Rangers to see where they are going on their hike.
- Pose questions to the group to encourage everyone's involvement.
- Repeat questions from the children.
- Allow enough time for Junior Rangers to respond to questions.
- Look for children to indicate they wish to respond to a question before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with a child's ability to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Provide smooth transitions in presentations. Jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Discuss ideas in basic terms, avoiding abstractions. Organize information in a logical fashion. Deliver it in short segments and reinforce it through repetition.
- Some children with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concepts of historical or calendar time. If this information is included in your presentation, use different methods to explain or demonstrate it.
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
- Explain unfamiliar words and concepts. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject. Children may wish to learn more about the subjects presented in the Junior Ranger program.
- If your group consists entirely of children with learning disabilities, you may want to keep your program to no more than 30 minutes.

Mental Retardation

- Select areas with minimal background noises and few distractions for your Junior Ranger program.

- Provide children with a simple map of the area indicating where your Junior Ranger activities will occur, and what you will see. This will help stimulate curiosity and interest in your program.
- Have everyone's attention before beginning to speak. If part of the discussion is missed, interest may be lost altogether.
- Be aware that not all children may wish to stay for the entire Junior Ranger program. Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans. Prior arrangements may need to be made to escort individuals back to their family or guardian.
- Provide information in small, organized segments. Too much information may be overwhelming, causing some children to lose interest. Keep the program limited to one or two primary ideas, and stay focused on the theme.
- Avoid sweeping arm movements or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Repeat questions from the group. Some children may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten it, or may not have been paying attention.
- Allow enough time for the Junior Rangers to answer your question. Look for children to indicate they wish to respond before calling on them. Try to ask open-ended questions with neither right nor wrong answers. Offer immediate, positive feedback to the children.
- Do not immediately dismiss a question as being irrelevant. Sometimes, poor language skills confuse what the individual is trying to say. Try to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Demonstrate the Junior Ranger activity before asking program participants to perform it. Do not talk as you demonstrate the task or activity. The group may be concentrating on your movements or the object, and not on your words. Give explanations and information before or after the demonstration.
- Relate new information to the children's lives and then reinforce this information through repetition.
- Encourage every Junior Ranger to participate. If a child with mental retardation is left with "empty time," he or she may lose interest and may become disruptive.
- In some instances, you may need to remind the Junior Ranger group of the park's or program's rules, and what can or cannot be touched.
- Choose activities involving partners and that do not single out individuals. Some children may not want to participate, fearing embarrassment. Positive reinforcement from you may encourage future involvement.
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
- Explain unfamiliar words or concepts. Include these words with their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject.
- Incorporate items that may be touched, heard, smelled, and tasted pertaining to the theme of your program. Information presented in a variety of ways can reinforce learning and increase interest in your program. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas add another dimension to verbal explanation.

- Remind children to handle objects with care. If you are concerned that the objects may be dropped or mishandled, hold the objects yourself, or pass around only non-breakable items.
- If your group consists entirely of children with mental retardation, you may want to keep your program to no more than 30 minutes.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the access to the areas where you plan to take the Junior Rangers. Stairs, steep slopes, and uneven surfaces may pose problems for children with mobility impairments. Walk the route you plan to take with the Junior Rangers and look for any barriers or other difficulties that may be encountered. Plan a route that is accessible to the entire audience. When publicizing the program, indicate the accessibility of the area; the difficulty of the walk; and the length of the tour or walk. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section beginning on page 125, *Parks Accessibility Guidelines*, The ADA Accessibility Guidelines, and *California State Accessibility Standards* for more information.
- At the beginning of a walk or hike, remind the group of any obstacles that may be encountered.
- Provide a film, slide show, or photographs of public areas not accessible by wheelchair. In addition, provide objects or replicas of artifacts from an area or room not accessible for the children to see and/or touch. For example, if the Junior Rangers are going on a hike into the forest and the trail has steps or large obstacles that cannot be maneuvered by a child in a wheelchair, then bring the forest to the visitor. Show the child slides or photographs, including interesting and common features seen along the trail. Have samples of objects found along the path for the child to see, feel, hear, or smell.
- Allow extra time for the hike or shorten its length, as children with mobility impairments may require more time to move about.
- Allow children to leave a program by making prior arrangements to have a staff member escort them back to their families or guardians. Some children may find a long hike too strenuous. Offer an optional “leisure tour,” a separate walk available to anyone who wants to proceed at a slower pace.
- Prearranged rest breaks should be announced at the beginning of Junior Ranger hikes, and additional breaks should be accommodated, if requested.
- Provide seating with backs and armrests at intervals throughout a long hike. For outside programs, seating in the shade is preferred. Some people with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature and may be susceptible to heat stroke.
- If you have a Junior Ranger who is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before you begin speaking.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors using wheelchairs. Show objects at their eye level. Some individuals have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time. Mirrors can be used to assist individuals looking up at high places, such as a forest canopy or the top of a historic building.

- When incorporating items that may be touched into your programs, be aware of individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold objects for the children, while they touch or look at it.
- If you are pushing a child using a wheelchair during a program, do not deliver program information while walking. This individual may not hear you. It may be necessary to seek assistance from another staff member to push the wheelchair, while you present your program.
- Do not exclude children using communication books or boards from discussions. Look for an indication that they wish to respond and then give them the time they need to formulate their message.

Visual Impairments

- During your program, be aware of any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered by children with visual impairments. Inform the group about any obstacles at the beginning of your hike. You or another staff member may be requested to guide a child with a visual impairment. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique on page 35 for suggestions.
- If possible, before the program begins, meet with children who are visually impaired to ask if there is anything they would like described to them.
- Select areas with minimal background noise for your Junior Ranger programs.
- Provide a tactile relief map of the facility and/or area so children with visual impairments can become oriented to their surroundings.
- Be alert to the individual needs of children with visual impairments. Allow them to sit or stand close to the front, so they can see you or the objects of discussion more easily.
- Provide adequate lighting for reading, drawing, or craft activities.
- Wait for the children to settle before speaking. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Always talk facing the group and the light source.
- Give clear, verbal direction to Junior Rangers when moving from one area to another. Once at your destination, provide a general orientation to the whole area, including atmosphere and visual details.
- Read aloud exhibit or trail signage.
- Use descriptive language during your program. Emphasize textures, colors, and topography. Be familiar with different methods for describing historical and natural settings and objects. Verbal description plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information.
- Magnifiers should be available to use on photographs, signs, or exhibits, or to take on outdoor walks. The whole group can benefit and enjoy hand lenses on a hike by taking a closer look at leaves, bark, or bugs.
- Use enlarged photographs to allow children to see more detail.
- Take a moment to listen to the sounds and to smell the fragrances of the area. Be aware of sounds and smells you might otherwise ignore. Discuss what you hear and smell. Encourage the entire group to use their other senses, in addition to sight.

- Use life-size or scale models of objects that may not be touched.
- When demonstrating a skill, have a child with a visual impairment hold your hands as you work; at the same time, explain in detail what you are doing. Stacey French, an Interpretive Specialist in the Sacramento Historic Sites Sector, once had a child with total blindness hold her hands as she made a duck decoy out of tules; then they switched places, and he made the duck. This activity was rewarding for the visitor and Stacey as well.
- Handouts supplied to the Junior Rangers, such as scavenger hunt sheets, should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- Offer an additional reading list pertaining to the theme of the Junior Ranger program. The participants may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement their visit.

Limited English Proficiency

- If necessary, pantomime your message. This may be the only way to communicate with some children whose English proficiency is limited. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. Draw pictures, if needed, to communicate interpretive information.
- Prepare photographs, slides, objects, and other visual and tactile examples to illustrate interpretive information.
- Repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey interpretive information.
- Point to objects to which you are referring.
- Ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate for you during the Junior Ranger program. Or, if you think that will be too disruptive, offer to meet with the child and a translator after the program to review interpretive information.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Look for children to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Calling on them before they are ready may cause embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them.
- If the number of Junior Ranger participants warrants it, have copies of written materials available in different languages.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the Junior Ranger program to answer any questions or to repeat information.

Living History Programs

Living history has become an important interpretive medium for many historic parks. This type of presentation incorporates authentic activities, replica clothing, objects, and historic personas, which are used to re-create an event in which visitors gain insights into the history of a site and/or period. Living history requires not only accuracy in detail, but also participants willing to share their special knowledge with visitors. It is through interactive presentations that visitors understand how the demonstrations, scenarios, or reenactments fit into the larger historical picture.

The following are suggestions to assist park staff in preparing for and delivering living history programs that can be enjoyed by all visitors.

Hearing Impairments

- Meet with visitors with hearing impairments prior to the living history presentation and find out how to best suit their needs. With the wide range of hearing impairments, several options for assistance are possible.

- One option is to provide an amplification system for your program. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- Use a microphone if your voice projection is weak, or if performing for a large audience.
- Where possible, select areas that have minimal background noise and few distractions for the living history demonstrations and reenactments.
- Suggest to visitors with hearing impairments that they sit at the front of the audience, so they can hear better.
- If requested in advance by a visitor with a hearing impairment, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- While performing the role of a historic persona or when interacting with visitors, always face the light source and the audience. This will facilitate speech-reading. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it also becomes difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- Position living history characters so the audience can see them and their activities at the same time. This allows visitors to speech-read and focus on the activities at the same time.
- Speaking clearly is as important as speaking loudly, when performing as a historic character. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not let the level of your delivery trail off at the end of a passage.
- Provide an outline of the living history presentation's script, so visitors can more easily follow along.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Be sure to allow enough time for the audience to answer your questions.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may distract some visitors from watching the oral or sign language interpreter, or may make speech-reading difficult.

Learning Disabilities

- The interpretive content of the living history program does not need to be presented at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Select areas with minimal background noise to avoid distractions during the program.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak and that they have understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Have living history characters interact with the audience as part of the program. Try to involve all the visitors' senses. For example, allow them to touch some of the tools or other objects being used in the program. This will reinforce learning and increase interest in the presentation.
- Use a variety of media to convey information. Living history characters might have a basket or box filled with plant or animal specimens, photographs, tools, toys, drawings, or other materials to share with visitors. These all add to the verbal explanation.

- Interpretive information should be delivered in short segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Provide smooth transitions in your program; jumping from one subject to another or one character to another without adequate explanation may cause confusion.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" the audience. Too much information may cause confusion, resulting in visitor disinterest in the living history presentation. Try to limit the program to one or two main ideas.
- Discuss concepts and ideas in basic terms, and avoid abstractions.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause embarrassment.
- Allow enough time for the audience to answer your questions. A speech impairment or memory problem may interfere with a visitor's ability to answer questions.
- Do not dismiss questions or answers that may seem irrelevant to the subject. Try your best to relate the questions or the answers to the living history program.
- Explain unfamiliar words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the historic subject or era.
- Allow individuals to leave living history presentations early, as some individuals with learning disabilities may have shorter attention spans.
- Individuals with learning disabilities may have difficulty understanding the concept of historical or calendar time. Explain or demonstrate this information in different ways. For example, relate time to something familiar in their lives, such as their age.

Mental Retardation

- Choose areas with minimal distractions for the living history program.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning the living history program. If part of the discussion is missed, interest in the presentation may be lost altogether.
- Encourage audience participation involving all their senses. Allow visitors to touch the tools used in the presentation, or bring along dried foods, herbs, or spices relative to the historic period for visitors to smell or taste. This will increase interest in your presentation and aid in learning.
- Give information in small, organized segments and reinforce through repetition.
- Discuss ideas and concepts in basic terms and avoid abstractions.
- Relate new information to something already familiar to the audience to assist learning.
- Repeat questions from the audience. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten it, or may not have been paying attention.
- During a living history program, do not immediately dismiss a visitor's question or answer as being irrelevant. Sometimes, poor language skills confuse what the individual is trying to say. Do your best to relate the question or the answer to the subject or era.
- Explain unfamiliar words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the historic subject or era.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the access to the areas where the living history program will be taking place. Be sure they are accessible to people with mobility impairments. Stairs, slopes, and slippery surfaces may cause difficulty for visitors with mobility impairments. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section on page 125 for more information and requirements.
- Seating with backs and armrests should be provided. For outdoor living history programs, seating should be located in shady areas. Some individuals with mobility impairments have difficulty regulating their body temperature and can easily suffer from heat stroke.
- In areas without seating, allow visitors using wheelchairs to move to the front of the audience, so they can see and hear better.
- If a visitor is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before beginning the living history program.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of individuals with mobility impairments. Some individuals may have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time.
- Do not exclude people using communication boards or books from discussions. Look for an individual to indicate they wish to answer a question or make a comment before asking them to respond and be sure to give them the extra time they may need.

Visual Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the access to the areas where the living history presentation will take place. Plan routes that are accessible to the entire audience. Remove any obstacles or protruding objects which may be encountered.
- Choose areas with minimal background noise for the living history program.
- Meet with visitors before the presentation to ask if there is anything they would like described to them. Provide visitors with a general orientation to the area, including ambiance and visual details.
- Allow visitors to feel the costumes and objects used in the living history program, as you guide them with verbal descriptions. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information.
- Suggest to visitors with visual impairments that they sit or stand in front of the audience, so they can see better.
- Wait for the audience to settle before beginning any living history dialogues. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Always face the audience and the light source when you speak.
- If possible, offer a prerecorded audiodescription of the living history presentation. For more information, refer to the Audiodescription section on page 37.
- When demonstrating a skill, have a visitor with a visual impairment hold your hands as you work, while at the same time explaining in detail what you are doing.

- Handouts developed for the living history program and supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.

Limited English Proficiency

- If the audience warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter be a part of the living history program.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate during the living history program.
- If necessary, pantomime your message. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements, or draw pictures to communicate interpretive information.
- Point to objects to which you are referring during the living history program.
- Have the living history characters repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey the interpretive information.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, idioms, and slang, as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Provide a handout or a cassette tape of the living history presentation in different languages. Include in the tape or handout, an explanation about the activities and demonstrations, the names of the tools, and other pertinent information related to the re-created events.
- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the tour to answer any questions or to repeat information.

Older Adults

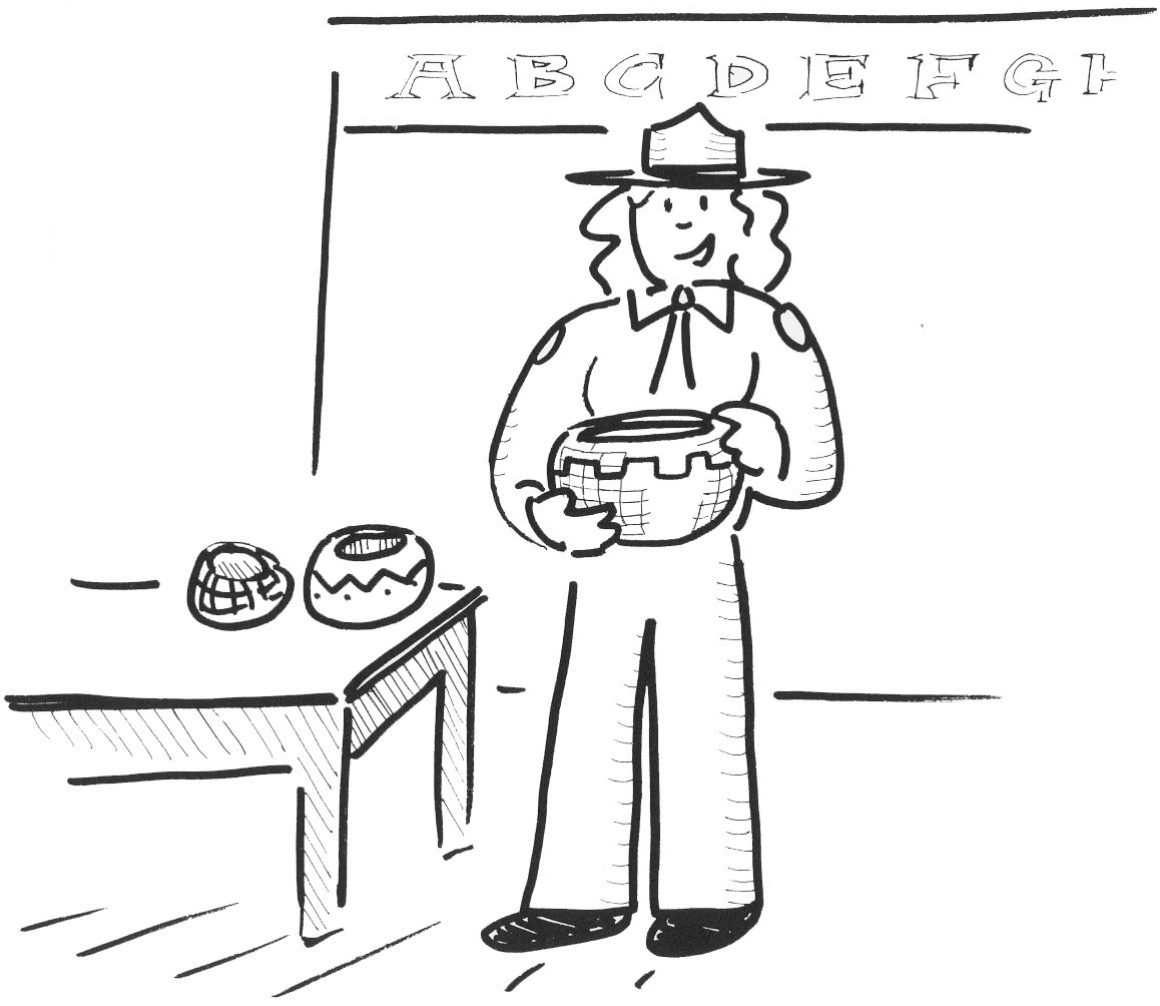
Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities previously mentioned, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already suggested, here are further considerations for older adult visitors.

- Some older individuals have difficulty seeing cool colors, such as green and blue. Where appropriate, use a variety of colors for props and period clothing (especially small items) in the living history presentation.
- Some older individuals need time to allow their eyes to adjust to drastic changes in light levels. Allow visitors to stay seated while their eyes adjust to changes in light, possibly using this time for discussion.

Off-Site Interpretive Programs

Off-site interpretive programs can extend park interpretation into local communities. These programs enable professional staff and docents to share their interests, skills, and knowledge with those sectors of the community that are unable to come to park sites. Off-site interpretive programs can take many forms, such as workshops, classes, talks, A/V programs, and demonstrations. Older adults, people with disabilities, and school children make ideal audiences for off-site interpretive programs. Also, presentations made to local service groups help build community support for park programs.

The following are suggestions to assist park staff in preparing for and delivering off-site interpretive programs so they may be satisfying and informative for a diverse audience.



Hearing Impairments

- With the wide range of hearing abilities and limitations, it is best to speak with the group's contact person beforehand to find out how to best suit individual or group needs. Portable assistive listening devices can aid many visitors in hearing your talk. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- Let the group's contact person know that your program needs an area with minimal background noise.
- If requested in advance, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- Invite individuals with hearing impairments to sit up front to hear better, facilitate speech-reading, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you know some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Always face the audience when you speak. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it also becomes difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- Present your program in a normal tone of voice and volume. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not assume you need to shout to people who are hearing impaired. Speak louder only when it is requested and then try not to shout.
- Be sure to have everyone's attention before beginning to speak and that everyone has understood before continuing.
- Use short sentences and a subject-verb-object sentence structure. This works best because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example, say, "The Army Corps of Engineers built the dam," not, "The dam was built by the Army Corps of Engineers."
- When showing the group an object and discussing it at the same time, allow time for everyone to see what you have just described. Although some people can look at an object as you talk about it, individuals with hearing impairments may need to watch the sign language or oral interpreter, or may be speech-reading. Position yourself so the group can see you and any objects of discussion at the same time. When working with a sign language or oral interpreter, place yourselves so that the object is between you.
- Always face the light source and the audience when speaking. This allows the group to see your face and will facilitate speech-reading. If your program involves slides, try to have a light source directed toward you in a darkened room.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may distract an individual from speech-reading or watching the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Repeat questions from the audience and allow enough time for the audience to respond. An individual with a hearing impairment may understand the question a few seconds later, because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts. Include these words and definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject being interpreted.

- Provide an outline of your off-site interpretive program, so that your audience can more easily follow along.

Learning Disabilities

- Prior to your visit, provide the group with written and audio-visual materials pertaining to the program theme. This increases their interest, anticipation, and knowledge of the subjects to be presented.
- Let the group's contact person know that your program requires an area with minimal background noise and distractions.
- Keep the group small. It is helpful to work one-on-one as much as possible.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak and that everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" the audience with too much information, as this may cause confusion and disinterest. It is important to stay focused on your theme.
- Program content does not need to be presented at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways. Use several media to convey interpretive information. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas can all add to verbal explanation.
- Involve all the senses in your off-site interpretive program. Incorporate items that may be smelled, heard, touched, and tasted pertaining to the theme of your program. Information provided in this way reinforces learning and increases interest in your off-site interpretive program. For example, bring along a collection of objects pertaining to the theme of the program, such as pelts, bones, tools, dried foods, or clothing.
- Emphasize the colors, textures, sounds, and smells of an object, discussing each characteristic individually.
- Bring along photographs or a video of your park site to present during or after your off-site interpretive program. This may entice the group to visit the park.
- Pose questions to the entire audience to encourage everyone's involvement.
- Allow enough time for the audience to answer your questions.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. A speech impairment or memory problem can interfere with an individual's ability to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Provide smooth transitions in presentations; jumping rapidly from one subject to another may cause confusion in your audience.
- Discuss ideas and concepts in basic terms and avoid abstractions. Arrange the material to be presented in an organized fashion. Interpretive information should be delivered in short segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Individuals with learning disabilities may have difficulty understanding the concept of historical and calendar time. If this information is included in your presentation, use different ways to explain or demonstrate it.

- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings. Individuals may wish to learn more about the subjects presented during your program.
- Discuss the content and length of the off-site interpretive program with the group's contact person. If the group consists of all children with learning disabilities, you may consider limiting the program to 30 minutes.

Mental Retardation

- Let the group's contact person know that your program requires an area with minimal background noise and distractions.
- Prior to your visit, find out the group's interests and plan the program's theme around them.
- Provide a video or photographs of the park site. This may stimulate the group's curiosity and interest in the visiting the park.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before beginning to speak. If part of the discussion is missed by your audience, interest may be lost altogether.
- Present information in small, organized segments. Large amounts of information may overwhelm some visitors, causing them to lose interest.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Repeat questions from the audience. Some individuals may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention.
- Be sure to allow enough time for the audience to respond to your questions. Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Ask open-ended questions with neither right nor wrong answers, and offer immediate, positive feedback to the individual.
- Do not dismiss a question as being irrelevant to the point of your program. Sometimes poor language skills may confuse what the individual is trying to say. Relate the question or answer to the program's subject as best you can.
- During the off-site interpretive program, demonstrate the activity or concept, relate the information to your audience, and then reinforce the information through repetition.
- Encourage audience participation. If individuals with mental retardation are left with "empty time," they may lose interest and could become disruptive.
- Choose activities that involve partners and do not single out individuals. Some individuals may not want to become involved because of their fear of embarrassment. Your positive reinforcement may encourage their future involvement.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the off-site interpretive program's subject(s).
- Share items that may be touched, heard, smelled, and tasted pertaining to the theme of your talk. Information presented in a variety of ways not only reinforces

learning, but also increases interest in your program. Models, plant and animal specimens, photographs, drawings, and dioramas can all add to the verbal explanation.

- When incorporating objects to be touched into your program, remind everyone to handle the objects with care. If you are concerned about objects being dropped or mishandled, hold the objects yourself, or pass around only non-breakable items.
- Beforehand, discuss the program content and length with the group's contact person. If your group consists of all people with mental retardation, consider limiting the program to 30 minutes.

Mobility Impairments

- Let the group's contact person know that your program needs an area that is accessible to all visitors. If the prearranged space is not accessible, relocate your program to an accessible area.
- Seating with backs and armrests should be provided. For programs presented outside, seating with shade is preferred, as some people with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature and can easily suffer from heat stroke.
- Do not exclude people using communication boards or books from discussions. Look for audience members to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them and then give them the time they need to respond.
- If you have a visitor who is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before beginning to speak.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of visitors in wheelchairs. Present objects at eye level for people in wheelchairs. Some individuals may have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time.
- When incorporating touchable items into your off-site interpretive programs, be aware of your audience's individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold the objects, while the group members touch or look at them.
- Do not deliver program information while pushing an individual in a wheelchair. This individual may not hear you when you are standing behind him/her. It may be necessary to seek assistance from another staff member to push the wheelchair while you present the information.

Visual Impairments

- You or another staff member may be requested to guide a visitor with a visual impairment. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique on page 35 for tips on assisting people with visual impairments.
- Let the group's contact person know that your program requires an area with minimal background noise.
- If possible, before the off-site interpretive program begins, meet with individuals who are visually impaired to explain its content and to ask if there is anything they would like described beforehand.

- Wait for the audience to settle before beginning the program. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Be aware of the needs of individuals with visual impairments. Suggest that they sit or stand up close so they can see you or the object of discussion more easily.
- Always face the light source when speaking to your audience.
- Use descriptive language during your program, emphasizing textures, colors, topography, etc. Be familiar with different methods for describing historical and natural settings and objects. The ability to convey information plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description on page 35 for more information.
- Provide magnifiers to use for photographs, models, and objects presented during the program.
- Use enlarged photographs to allow individuals to see more detail.
- Share items relating to the program's theme that encourage the use of all the audience's senses.
- When demonstrating a skill, let a person with a visual impairment hold your hands as you work, while at the same time explaining in detail what you are doing.
- Supply handouts to the audience in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- Provide a reading list pertaining to the off-site interpretive program's theme. Audience members may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement your presentation.

Limited English Proficiency

- If possible and if warranted by the audience, make arrangements for a bilingual interpreter to translate during the off-site interpretive program.
- If a translator is not available, communicate your message through pantomime. This may be the only way to communicate with some individuals who have limited English proficiency. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. If needed, draw pictures to communicate interpretive information.
- Present photographs, slides, objects, and other visual and tactile materials to illustrate the interpretive information in the program.
- Repeat the off-site interpretive program's information in a variety of ways, using different words, gestures, and objects to convey the material.
- Point to objects to which you are referring.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause undue embarrassment.

- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them.
- If warranted by the volume of visitation, have copies of written materials made available in different languages.
- Offer to meet with members of the audience after the program, to answer any questions, or to repeat information.

Older Adults

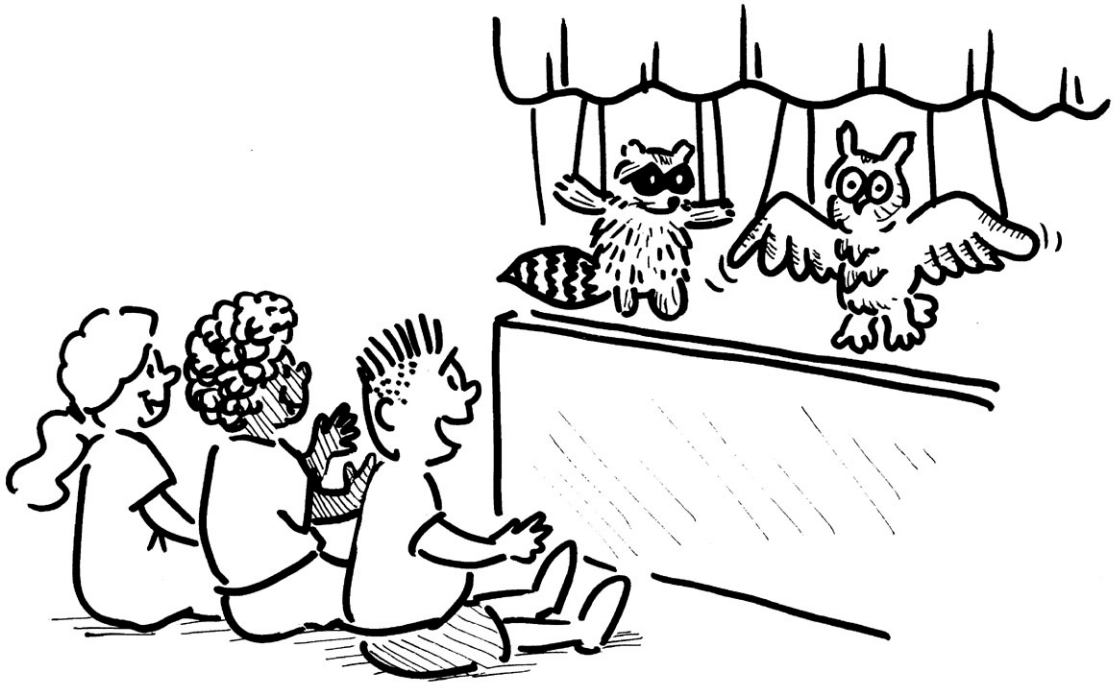
Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities previously mentioned, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already suggested, here are further considerations for older adult visitors.

- If you are planning to distribute written materials to your audience as part of your off-site interpretive program, make sure there is adequate light for reading.
- Some older adults may need time to allow their eyes to adjust to drastic changes in light levels. Remove any potential barriers that may cause accidents in areas where extreme changes in lighting levels occur, or allow the group to stay still for a few minutes. You could use this time for a group discussion.

Puppet Shows

Shadow puppets, string and rod puppets, marionettes, and hand puppets have been used for thousands of years to entertain and educate and to comment on society and politics. Today, puppet shows have proven to be an excellent way of communicating resource information and park values to children and adults alike. Through stories, songs, improvised dialogues, and jokes, live puppetry can engage and focus the audience's attention, imagination, and emotions around important interpretive concepts. Such programs can be employed to help individuals see critical issues from a variety of perspectives, as well as to better appreciate the world around them.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering puppet shows so they may be enjoyed by all visitors.



Hearing Impairments

- Beforehand, talk with visitors to find out how best to suit their needs, as there is a wide range of hearing abilities and limitations. Many visitors can be aided in hearing the puppet show through portable assistive listening devices. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- Use a microphone if your voice projection is weak or if performing for a large audience.

- Consider pre-recording the puppet show's dialogue with sound effects and amplifying it for the audience.
- Speaking clearly is as important as speaking loudly when performing as a puppeteer. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not let the level of your delivery trail off at the end of a passage.
- When requested in advance by a visitor, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter for the puppet show. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- Have the oral or sign language interpreter face the audience and a light source.
- Suggest to visitors with hearing impairments that they be seated at the front of the audience, so they can hear better, speech-read, or see the sign language or oral interpreter.
- If you are familiar with some sign language, use it. Your attempts will generally be appreciated.
- Present puppet shows in areas where there is minimal background noise.
- Use short sentences. A subject-verb-object sentence structure works best, because it is the same syntax as American Sign Language. For example, say, "The raccoon ate our food," not, "Our food was eaten by the raccoon."
- Try to keep the dialogue to a minimum and pantomime the script with the puppets.
- Scripts should be easy to follow for both the audience and the oral or sign language interpreter.
- Sign language or oral interpreters should be positioned to one side of the puppet stage. During the program, allow extra time for visitors with hearing impairments to watch the puppets and then the sign language or oral interpreter.
- Repeat questions from the audience, and allow sufficient time for the audience to respond. Individuals with hearing impairments may understand the verbal exchange a few seconds later because the sign language or oral interpreter is sometimes a few words behind the speaker.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts used in the puppet show. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject.
- Copy the puppet show script and make it available for the audience, so they can follow along more easily.

Learning Disabilities

- Select an area for puppet shows to be staged that has few background noises or distractions.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have shorter attention spans and may not wish to stay for the length of the entire show. Do not be insulted if some visitors leave before the end of your program. You may consider limiting the puppet show to no longer than 30 minutes.
- Keep the puppet show audience small. Fewer people means fewer distractions.
- Have everyone's attention before beginning the puppet show.

- The script should be easy for the audience to follow.
- The program's content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- Emphasize colors, textures, sounds, or smells of an object. Discuss the important characteristics individually; otherwise, they may be overlooked.
- Use the puppets to pose questions to the entire audience to encourage everyone's involvement.
- Repeat any questions from the audience.
- Allow enough time for the audience to respond to questions.
- Look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Speech impairments or memory problems may interfere with visitors' abilities to answer questions. Calling on them when they are not ready may cause undue embarrassment.
- Keep transitions smooth in puppet show presentations. Skipping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical and calendar time. If this information is included in your puppet show, use different ways to describe or demonstrate it.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for further reading.

Mental Retardation

- Select an area for the puppet stage where there is minimal background noise and distractions.
- Keep the audience small for the performance. Also, it may be necessary to remind the group of the park's or museum's rules.
- Have everyone's attention before beginning the puppet show. If part of the program is missed, interest may be lost altogether.
- Some individuals with mental retardation have shorter attention spans and may not wish to stay for the entire puppet show. Do not be insulted if some visitors leave before the end of your program.
- Your script should be easy for the audience to follow. Present the story in small, organized segments so as not to overwhelm, which can cause some visitors to lose interest.
- An uncomplicated plot does not have to be boring or uneventful. There should be one theme that your characters are trying to convey. You do not want the audience to forget the theme, so throughout the show repeat it.
- Where possible, relate the puppet show's story to your audience's lives.
- Encourage audience participation whenever possible. If individuals with mental retardation are left with "empty time," they may lose interest and could become disruptive.
- Repeat any questions from the audience. Some individuals may not have heard the question, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention.

- Allow sufficient time for the audience to respond to your questions. Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Ask open-ended questions with neither right nor wrong answers, and offer immediate, positive feedback to the responses.
- Do not dismiss any audience questions or answers as being irrelevant. Sometimes poor language skills confuse an individual's response. Try to relate the question or answer to the subject of the puppet show.
- Explain new or difficult words or concepts within the context of the puppet show's script. These words and their definitions could also be included in a handout, along with suggestions for additional reading on the subject.
- In association with the performance, use items pertaining to the show's theme that may be touched, heard, smelled, or tasted. Information provided in this way increases interest and reinforces learning. For example, during a puppet show about California gold miners, a reproduction of a gold nugget could be passed around.
- If you are concerned about objects being dropped or mishandled, pass around only non-breakable items.

Mobility Impairments

- Prior to the arrival of the audience, evaluate access to the area where you plan to stage the puppet show. Stairs, curbs, and slippery surfaces may cause difficulty for visitors with mobility impairments. Walk the route to the area and look for any barriers or other difficulties, including slopes, that may be encountered. Plan a route that is accessible for the entire audience. When publicizing the program, be sure to indicate the accessibility of the area. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section beginning on page 125 for more information.
- Provide seating with backs and armrests. For puppet shows presented outside, shaded seating areas are preferred, as some people with mobility impairments cannot regulate their body temperature and may easily suffer from heat-related ailments.
- Be aware of the audience's line-of-sight. Stage the show at the eye level of people in wheelchairs. Some individuals with mobility impairments have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time.
- If a member of the audience is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before beginning the puppet show.
- When incorporating items that may be touched into your puppet program, be aware of individual capabilities and limitations. You or another staff member may need to hold objects for members of the audience while they touch or look at them.

Visual Impairments

- Present the puppet shows in areas with few background noises.
- Locate any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered en route to the puppet show and inform your prospective audience of these obstacles. You or another staff member may be requested to guide individuals with visual impairments

to their seats. Refer to the Sighted Guide Technique section on page 35 for tips on assisting people with visual impairments.

- If possible, meet with individuals who are visually impaired before the puppet show begins to ask if there is anything they would like described to them. Allow them to touch the puppets while you describe them. Be sure to include colors in your descriptions. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for further information.
- Offer audience members with visual impairments an overview of the stage and the general area where the puppet show is being presented. This will assist the visitors in better orienting themselves to their environment.
- Be alert to the individual needs of visually impaired audience members. Allow them to sit or stand close to the stage so they can see the puppet show more easily. Provide even and adequate lighting.
- Wait for the audience to settle before beginning the performance. Excess noise can be very distracting.
- Have the puppet show characters read aloud sign text or other written materials presented in the performance.
- Speaking clearly is as important as speaking loudly when performing as a puppeteer. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not let the level of your delivery drop at the end of a passage.
- Use descriptive language in the puppet show, emphasizing textures, colors, etc. Be familiar with different methods for describing historical and natural settings and objects. Verbal description plays an important role in guiding tactile exploration. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information.
- Your script should be easy for the audience to follow.
- If possible, involve all of the senses during your puppet show. Where appropriate, pass around items pertaining to the theme of the show that the audience can feel, smell, or listen to. Encourage the entire group to become aware of more than just their visual abilities.
- Any handouts supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.
- Provide an additional reading list pertaining to the theme of the puppet program. Audience members may be able to find talking books or books in Braille to supplement their visit.

Limited English Proficiency

- If the audience warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter narrate the puppet show.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or a friend of the visitor to translate for you during the puppet show. Or, if you think that will be too disruptive, arrange for a separate performance.

- Your script should be easy for the audience to follow.
- Keep the number of words to a minimum and pantomime the script with the puppets. Use facial expressions as well as hand and body movements with the puppets.
- Repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey the interpretive information. Prepare visual and tactile examples to illustrate the story.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions in the dialogue, as they may not be understood by the entire audience.
- Look for individuals to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond before they are ready may cause unnecessary embarrassment.
- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them. If possible, also have copies of those materials available in different languages.
- Offer to meet with members of the audience after the performance to answer any questions, or to repeat information.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities described previously, or none of them. In addition to some of the tips already mentioned, here are further considerations for older adult visitors.

- Low light levels in some areas may create difficulty for some audience members. If you are planning to distribute written materials, make sure there is adequate light for reading.
- At the program's end, older adults may need extra time to allow their eyesight to adjust to light level changes before leaving. Remove any potential barriers that may cause accidents in areas where extreme changes in lighting levels occur, or give them the extra time they may need.

Staged Dramatic Presentations

A dramatic presentation on a formal stage or platform can be an effective medium for conveying historic information. The presentation can be one person playing the role of a historic personality who tells stories and converses with the audience. Or, it may be a multi-person stage presentation recreating a historic event.

The following suggestions are provided to assist park staff in preparing and delivering staged dramatic presentations so they may be enjoyed by all audience members.

Hearing Impairments

- If possible, meet visitors with hearing impairments prior to your presentation to determine how to best suit their needs. Many options for assistance are possible to address the range of hearing impairments.
- Beforehand provide an outline of your staged dramatic presentation so visitors can more easily follow along.
- Use a microphone if your voice projection is weak or if performing for a large audience. Refer to the Assistive Listening Systems section on page 21 for more information.
- If requested in advance by a visitor, arrange for a licensed professional sign language or oral interpreter. Refer to the Working with an Oral or Sign Language Interpreter section on page 19 for more information.
- If using a portable stage, select a location that has minimal background noise for the presentation.
- Allow visitors with hearing impairments to sit up front so they can hear better.
- Wait for the group to settle before you begin the presentation.
- When on stage, always face the audience and the light source when you speak. This allows visitors to speech-read. If you turn away, speech-reading becomes impossible, and it also becomes difficult for the sign language or oral interpreter to hear you.
- Speaking clearly is as important as speaking loudly. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not let the level of your delivery trail off at the end of a passage.
- Position yourself on stage so the audience can see you and any objects of discussion at the same time. This allows visitors to speech-read while focusing on the objects at the same time.
- Point to the object to which you are referring. This provides a visual cue as to what is being presented.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- Allow plenty of time for the audience to answer your questions.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may distract some visitors from watching the oral or sign language interpreter or may make speech-reading difficult.
- If technology allows, during the scripted formal part of the dramatic presentation use “real time” captioning. Real time captioning projects the text of the program on a screen in large lettering as it is being spoken. If this isn’t possible, have a printed transcript available.

Learning Disabilities

- The staged dramatic presentation’s content does not need to be at a lower comprehension level, just communicated in a variety of ways.
- When setting up a portable stage for a dramatic presentation, select an area with minimal background noise to avoid distractions.

- Interact with your audience during your dramatic presentation. Try to involve all their senses. This will reinforce information and increase interest in your dramatic presentation. For example, offer back stage tours and allow visitors to touch the costumes, tools, or other props before or after the performance.
- Interpretive information should be delivered in short segments and reinforced through repetition.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin the dramatic presentation. Also, periodically check to see if everyone has understood what you have just said before continuing.
- Provide smooth transitions in your presentation. Jumping from one subject to another may cause confusion.
- Avoid "over-stimulating" the audience. Too much information may cause confusion and result in the visitors becoming uninterested in your presentation. Keep the program limited to one or two primary ideas.
- Discuss concepts and ideas in basic terms and avoid abstractions.
- Repeat questions from the audience.
- When asking the audience questions from the stage, look for visitors to indicate they wish to answer a question before calling on them. Asking them to respond when they are not ready may cause embarrassment. Allow enough time for the audience to answer your questions. Speech impairments or memory problems may interfere with visitors' abilities to answer questions.
- Try not to dismiss questions or answers that seem irrelevant to the subject. Relate the questions or the answers as best you can to the dramatic presentation.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words and their definitions in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject.
- Allow people to leave during your presentation, or make prior arrangements for another staff person to escort the (s) back, as some individuals with learning disabilities may have shorter attention spans. For longer presentations, you may want to schedule a break. Notify the audience before the presentation begins that an intermission can be expected.
- Some individuals with learning disabilities have difficulty understanding the concept of historical or calendar time. If this information is included in your presentation, use different ways to explain or demonstrate it.

Mental Retardation

- When using a portable stage, choose an area with minimal distractions for the dramatic presentation.
- Be sure you have everyone's attention before you begin the dramatic presentation. If part of the stage presentation is missed, interest in your program may be lost altogether.
- Interact with your audience before and/or during your staged dramatic presentation. Try to involve all their senses. This will reinforce information and increase interest in

your dramatic presentation. For example, mingle with the audience and allow visitors to touch the costumes, tools, or other props before or after the performance.

- Present the information in small, organized segments and reinforce it through repetition. Relate new information to something already familiar to your audience.
- Avoid sweeping arm motions or moving around while speaking, as this may be distracting.
- Discuss ideas and concepts in basic terms and avoid abstractions.
- Repeat questions from the audience. Some visitors may not have heard the question being asked, may have forgotten the question, or may not have been paying attention.
- Do not immediately dismiss a visitor's question or answer as being irrelevant. Sometimes, poor language skills confuse what the individual is trying to say. Do your best to relate the question or answer to the subject.
- Allow people to leave during your presentation, or make prior arrangements for another staff person to escort the visitor(s), as some individuals with mental retardation may have shorter attention spans. For longer staged presentations, you may want to schedule a break. Notify the audience before the presentation begins that an intermission can be expected.
- Explain new or difficult words and concepts. Include these words in a handout, along with suggestions for additional readings on the subject. Visitors may wish to learn more about the subject being presented.

Mobility Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the area where the staged dramatic presentation will take place. Be sure the area is accessible to people with mobility impairments. Stairs, curbs, and slippery surfaces may prove difficult to visitors with mobility impairments. A route with ramps may be necessary. Refer to the Interpretive Facilities section beginning on page 125 for more information and requirements.
- In areas without seating, allow visitors using wheelchairs to be seated up front so they can see and hear better. If possible, provide some seating for visitors who may be unable to stand for long periods of time.
- If a visitor is using an electric wheelchair, wait until the noise of the wheelchair has stopped before beginning the dramatic presentation.
- Be aware of the line-of-sight of individuals using wheelchairs or other assistive devices. Remember, some individuals may have difficulty looking up or down for long periods of time.

Visual Impairments

- Beforehand, evaluate the accessibility of the area where the staged dramatic presentation will take place. Plan a route that is accessible to the entire audience. Remove any obstacles or protruding objects that may be encountered. Once visitors have reached their destination, provide a general orientation of the area, including ambiance and visual details.

- If possible, provide a prerecorded audiodescription of the dramatic presentation. For more information, refer to the Audiodescription section on page 37.
- Meet with visitors before the presentation and ask if there is anything they would like described to them beforehand. For example, before the presentation begins, allow visitors to feel the costumes and objects used in the dramatic presentation, as you guide them with verbal description. Refer to the Methods of Description section on page 35 for more information. Pat Turse, a Guide I at the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park, uses guided imagery by setting the historical scene with sensual descriptions—recalling smells and sounds and the feeling of clothing.
- After the performance has ended, demonstrate the skill(s) used in the dramatic presentation and have the visitor hold your hands as you work, at the same time explaining in detail what you are doing.
- Recommend to visitors with visual impairments that they sit or stand in front so they can see better. Be aware of lighting conditions and minimize glares.
- Wait for the audience to settle before you begin to talk—excessive noise can be very distracting.
- Speaking clearly is as important as speaking loudly. Try to project your voice from your diaphragm. Do not let the level of your delivery trail off at the end of a passage.
- Handouts supplied to the audience should be in large, dark print (a 12 point, sans serif font) and on a light matte background. Be prepared to explain the contents of handouts for those who are unable to read them. Written materials that are distributed regularly to visitors should also be available in an alternate format, such as printed in an 18 point sans serif font and/or in Braille.

Limited English Proficiency

- If the audience warrants it, plan to have a bilingual interpreter be a part of the dramatic presentation.
- Pantomime your message. Use facial expressions, as well as hand and body movements. If needed, draw pictures to communicate interpretive information.
- If warranted, during the dramatic program's formal staged presentation, project subtitles in a foreign language or have printed transcripts in a foreign language available.
- On short notice, ask a bilingual family member or friend of the visitor to translate during your presentation.
- If the majority of your audience has limited English proficiency, speak slowly and clearly so they have a better chance of understanding you.
- Point to objects to which you are referring. This provides a visual cue that may help visitors in understanding your presentation.
- Avoid using colloquial expressions, as they may not be understood by all visitors.
- Repeat information in a variety of ways. Use different words, gestures, and objects to convey interpretive information.
- Provide a handout or audiotape of the dramatic presentation dialogue in different languages.

- When distributing written materials, explain the contents for those who may not be able to read them.
- Offer to meet with visitors after the tour to answer any questions or repeat information.

Older Adults

Older adults may have one or more of the disabilities described previously, or none of them. In addition to some of the program tips already mentioned, here are additional considerations for older adults.

- Some older individuals have difficulty seeing cool colors, such as green or blue. Use a variety of colors for props and costumes in your dramatic presentation.
- Some older adults need extra time for their eyes to adjust to drastic changes in light levels. At the end of an indoor performance, allow visitors to stay seated while their eyes adjust to the change in light. Use this time to answer questions about the presentation.

Special Events

Nearly all state parks hold special events, whether to celebrate park anniversaries or a famous individual's birthday, to commemorate significant events, or just to gather people together to have fun. During special events, park sites may experience visitation of hundreds, or even thousands, more than on their average days. Before these events, park staff must make special preparations for this increase in attendance. Having more visitors also means greater numbers of individuals with varying disabilities, and additional arrangements need to be made to accommodate them.

The following are suggestions to assist park staff in preparing for special events.

- When publicizing a special event, indicate the accessibility of the area where it will be held. When using fliers for publicity, printed information should be produced in clear, readable type (12 point, sans serif font is recommended) and in dark ink on a light matte background. Refer to the Publications Guidelines section on page 167 for more information.
- Have a map of the area available noting accessible and non-accessible areas.
- If requested in advance, an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter must be hired to be present during presentations. In general, if oral presentations are a

significant part of the program, an ASL interpreter is recommended. Publicize that sign language or oral interpreters will be on site for the event. For more information, see Departmental Notice 2004-07 – Use of Qualified Sign Language Interpreters.

- When providing additional restroom facilities for special events, like portable toilets, remember to increase the number of accessible toilets. At least 5 percent plus 1 of added portable restrooms must be accessible. If portable toilets are clustered in several locations, there should be 5 percent, but no less than one, accessible toilets in each cluster. If only one portable toilet is available at each location, it must be accessible. Accessible units must be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility. Routes to and from restrooms must be accessible as well. Refer to the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* sections on Restrooms and Portable Toilets for further information.
- Assistive listening systems should be provided in assembly areas. *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* requires that receivers for assistive listening systems be provided at a rate of 4 percent of the total number of seats, but in no case should there be less than two receivers.
- When additional seating is provided for special events, remember to increase the number of spaces for people using wheelchairs. Seating requirements are as follows:

Seats	Wheelchair spaces
4-26	1
27-50	2
51-300	4
Over 500	add 1 per 100

- Wheelchair spaces must be level and should be distributed throughout the assembly area to provide a choice of sight lines. Readily removable seats may be installed in these wheelchair spaces when they are not accommodating wheelchair users. For complete information on wheelchair spaces in assembly areas, refer to the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* section on Campfire Centers/Assembly Areas.
- When providing additional parking, in a vacant lot for example, remember to include a number of additional spaces for accessible disabled parking. Refer to the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* for the required minimum number, as well as for the design of the parking spaces.
- Establish accessible routes to and from additional parking spaces, restrooms, and seating areas. Accessible routes must comply with the *ADA Accessibility Guidelines* or *California State Accessibility Standards*. Facilities must comply with the guideline that is the more stringent of the two. You may refer to the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* for further information.
- During special events, be certain there are adequate shaded areas and drinking fountains for visitors. Some individuals with mobility impairments have difficulty adjusting their body temperatures and are susceptible to heat-related ailments.
- See the Special Events Checklist in the appendix of the *Parks Accessibility Guidelines* for more information.